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THE NATION

MARCH 21, 1966 *35 cents*

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Justice Black at Eighty

THE COMMON SENSE OF FREEDOM

NORMAN REDLICH

AND NOW NKRUMAH

The Generals & the Future of Africa

Cousin David . . . LYONS' BIOGRAPHY OF SARNOFF

Carl Dreher

What They Want . . . 'TELEVISION AND SOCIETY'

Christopher Koch

Newspaper

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LETTERS

railroad blues

Latrobe, Pa.

DEAR SIRS: Desmond Smith's article ["Pennsy-Central: One Big Happy Railroad," *The Nation*, Feb. 14] is typical of the anti-business attitude of *The Nation*. . . .

Smith would have us believe that the railroad industry is a thriving giant, with no concerns except when to have stock splits and by how much to increase dividends. . . . Where are the dividends on the bankrupt New Haven or the Reading or the Lehigh Valley, to name a few? Where was the nonoperating income on the Pennsylvania only a few years ago when it ran at enormous losses? . . . Smith quotes a Pittsburgh manufacturer as being opposed to the merger. Why doesn't he give all the facts, which show the vast majority of shippers as being in favor of the new system? . . . Finally, is he to be taken seriously on the question of freight rates? The ICC certainly is overworked and understaffed. However, when Smith says that it protects the railroads he once again blandly ignores the facts. Railroads cannot change a rate without ICC permission, and that often comes too late or never. . . .

Anthony J. Schill

New York City

DEAR SIRS: Mr. Schill has been bamboozled into some careless thinking. First, the New Haven Railroad is *not* bankrupt. If it is, it will be news to its stockholders. On the contrary, it is presently one of the richest landowners in New York City. To be sure, it is no longer making money on its passenger services. This situation will shortly be eased either by increasing its present large subsidy or by a take-over of its passenger lines.

Second, the Pennsylvania Railroad has never in its history shown a loss in its nonoperating accounts.

Third, to suggest—as Mr. Schill does—that "the vast majority of shippers" are in favor of the merger is hogwash. I refer him only to the evidence in the United States brief opposing the merger.

Fourth, . . . the ICC regulates *all* traffic (trucks, water and railroads) that deals in interstate commerce. It is the consensus of most responsible observers that the ICC has shown a pronounced bias in favor of the railroads.

Desmond Smith

Rhodesia in Washington

Tougaloo, Miss.

DEAR SIRS: I am shocked to learn that Rhodesia has opened an office in Washington, D.C., to represent the Smith white minority government. . . . When the State Department was asked about the Rhodesian office, it denied any knowledge of it. How can a foreign office be established in Washington without the State Department's consent?

Obuya Onyatch

why the unanimity?

Rock Springs, Wyo.

DEAR SIRS: While reading "The Dragon: Myths and Realities" by Stanley Spector and J. Hartwell Moore [*The Nation*, Mar. 7], I was struck by the almost frenzied insistence upon the necessity for China to have become Communist to achieve what it has achieved. Perhaps I am too simple to understand these things, but how did Japan manage to lurch to its present industrial eminence under a democratic system? Why does every expert who has been there assume that the present way in China is best? Why must progress be paid for in intense suffering by large minorities so that the majority can benefit? . . .

James L. Weeke

EDITORIALS

The Thrust of Policy

The President has let it be known that he is concerned about the recent dialogue within the country on Vietnam. This dialogue, he feels, has had the effect of increasing the pressure from those who want him to take even stronger military action than he has taken. As he interprets them, the polls have shown a sharp rise in the hawk population since the debate began. The inference would seem to be that the best way for the doves to attain their objectives would be to keep their mouths shut. The President may have read the polls correctly, but the reason for the shift in sentiment may be quite different from the one he stresses. If such a shift has taken place, it would seem to stem directly from the policy the President is pursuing, not from the criticism of that policy or the dialogue devoted to it, or, for that matter, from the present "peace offensive." It is not surprising if the public fails to distinguish between the President's intentions, as he voices them, and the thrust of the policy he has been pursuing; the public does not doubt his intentions, it is concerned with the actual operation of his policy. No doubt the President firmly believes that he is following a policy of prudence and moderation, but policies have a logic of their own which may lead to consequences other than those intended. The President may think his is a policy of "controlled escalation," but when the North Vietnamese respond by counter-escalation then the policy is undercutting the President's intentions.

According to Senator Mansfield, the North Vietnamese were infiltrating an estimated 1,500 troops a month in November; the estimate has now been increased to 4,500 a month. Given a 4-to-1 ratio in guerrilla fighting, this would mean that we would have to add 18,000 troops a month just to maintain the balance. The President may honestly think that his policy does not threaten China, but the Chinese will be guided more by our actions than by his words. The President may not intend to spread the war but it is spreading — into Thailand, Laos and possibly soon into Cambodia. The President may believe that he has staked out the center position on Vietnam — between the hawks and the doves — and is thereby invulnerable politically. But his words do not placate the doves, while his policy leads to a prevalence of hawks.

The policy is clearly based on the assumption — many times stated — that the application of military pressure will bring the enemy to the conference table. If military pressure is supposed to bring them round, and if they have failed to respond, then, inferentially, more pressure might do it — or so a section of the public not illogically concludes. It doesn't occur to this section to question the basic assumption. In brief, the President has no cause to complain if the public is more influenced by the thrust of his policy than by his pious statements about it. In the end, the operational policy — what we actually do, not the rhetorical statement of intentions — is controlling. The difficulty with the dialogue to date has been that it has not focused sharply enough on the thrust of American policy and the assumptions on which it is based.

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Douglas and the Devil Theory

That admirable statesman, Sen. Paul Douglas, has got himself into a peck of trouble in Illinois, all of his own making, and proving that foaming at the mouth over the Communist question is not always good politics.

On domestic issues, Senator Douglas has a superb record, but he has always been a fanatical cold warrior—for example, a sponsor of the Committee of One Million, which would torpedo the United Nations before admitting China to membership. That was bad enough, but in the February 13 Chicago *Sun-Times* the Senator was quoted as follows:

> . . . Communists are worse than Nazis. At least Nazis are not hypocrites. . . . Freedom is more important than peace and I will never yield in my resistance to Communist aggression. I violently disagree with criticism of our war effort in Vietnam.

Dissent came immediately from Dr. Edgar E. Siskin, rabbi of North Shore Congregation Israel at Glencoe, who had served with Senator (then Captain) Douglas in the First Marine Division in World War II. Dr. Siskin pointed out that as a rabbi he was profoundly opposed to communism, but its being coupled with Nazism dismayed him. He disagreed with Douglas both on his condemnation of criticism of our war effort in Vietnam and on the policy itself.

Dr. Siskin was joined by Rabbi Jacob Weinstein, who told "Dear Paul" that the overwhelming majority of thoughtful Jews subscribed to Rabbi Siskin's sentiments, and that the notion that Communists were worse than Nazis would find little support "even from those who think the very worst of the Communists." As for Vietnam, Rabbi Weinstein, who is president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, pointed out that his organization, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and the World Council of Churches had each in its own way found much to criticize in U.S. policy toward Vietnam.

These rejoinders were to be expected from clergymen like Siskin and Weinstein, and Douglas may not have taken too seriously Weinstein's reminder that the devil theory of history makes it impossible to understand communism as a historical phenomenon and ignores the "legitimate and constructive goals" which both the Russian and Chinese revolutions have achieved. But on the Vietnam phase of the debate worse was to come. In running for a fourth Senate term, the 74-year-old Douglas will face Charles H. Percy, the Chicago industrialist who lost to Governor Otto Kerner only because of the Goldwater handicap. And Percy, who is 47, has already begun to make Vietnam an issue. He is doing it in almost the way in which Karl Purnell advised the Republicans to proceed (see "The GOP's Nettle of Success," *The Nation,* January 24). Percy criticizes Administration policy as "impetuous, filled with contradictions, and with no clear blueprint of the real objectives," all of which will be difficult to controvert, by Senator Douglas or anyone else. Percy also purposes to make an issue of government-controlled news.

A victory for Percy would be a major upset. If it should occur, it would be unfortunate that it should be at Douglas' expense; except for his addiction to the devil theory and resulting blindness to the evils of our policy in Southeast

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Asia, he would continue to deserve liberal support. He is now in the process of alienating it, and if worst comes to worst for him, there would be some compensating results —the strengthening of the GOP nationally, and the emergence of a viable opposition to the Democrats, which in the long run would serve them well.

Muckraking, 1966

Time was when a muckraker became famous quickly and, if he was good enough, could count on a niche in the pantheon of letters—witness Samuel Hopkins Adams, Lincoln Steffens, Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair. They came to the notice of the great, favorably or otherwise; it was Theodore Roosevelt who gave the profession its name. As for the magazines for which the muckrakers wrote — *McClure's, Everybody's* and others—they prospered. When they perished, it may have been because they ceased to muckrake and became respectable.

Muckraking journalism is still important and the need for it is greater than ever, but now the way of the muckraker is hard. Some years back *The Nation* published "The Safe Car You Can't Buy," by Ralph Nader (April 11, 1959) and, more recently, his piece about the Corvair (November 1, 1965). Then Grossman Publishers brought out his book, *Unsafe At Any Speed,* and he became a witness before Congressional committees.

He has got attention, sure enough, but his chief reward has been harassment. It began at the hearings of the subcommittee on auto safety chaired by Senator Ribicoff (D., Conn.) when Sen. Carl T. Curtis (R., Neb.) heckled Nader so much that he was not able to finish reading his prepared statement. The questioning was so persistent and innuendo laden that Sen. Robert Kennedy (D., N.Y.) was moved to ask, at one point, if it is now a crime to write a book. But there was more to come. Detective agencies in at least three cities, Nader discovered, had spent a great deal of time checking up on his background; when questioned, they admitted the sleuthing but refused to name their clients. The questioning followed the pattern of a loyalty check: is he 100 per cent American, 100 per cent male, can they hook him with a woman, etc. The mystery of who was investigating Nader was soon solved but it took a little prodding. First Ribicoff called attention to a federal statute which allows a five-year prison term and a $5,000 fine for anyone who attempts to intimidate a Congressional witness. Then Ford and Chrysler issued statements in which both firms denied any connection with the investigation. That left it up to General Motors and, in an unusual, late-evening statement, company officials admitted that, yes, a "routine" investigation of Nader had been ordered. GM's fragile alibi is that it had reason to believe that there might have been some connection between Nader and attorneys for claimants in Corvair litigation. Nader now insists, and properly, that GM promptly acknowledge that its investigation turned up no evidence to support this contention. The company can hardly do less. What is surprising is not that GM should have attempted to engineer such a clumsy smear but that its officials could think that the rising demand for auto-safety legislation could be sidetracked so easily.

Automobile safety has now become a political issue. *Barron's Weekly* suggests it is because of the strong emotions that cluster around highway accidents. That is certainly a sound reason for politicians to pick it up—would that they were always as constructive! With highway deaths close to 50,000 a year, crippling injuries running into the hundreds of thousands, and the courts clogged with liability suits arising from minor accidents, it is high time that the politicians took an interest.

The automobile safety campaign has had red herrings drawn across its trail for so many years that reform is bound to be slow. The car manufacturers have put all the emphasis on the driver and absolved the vehicle with all the means at their command—and those means are not small. Of course, since most cars involved in an accident are being driven, driver error often does play a part, but how this can justify putting faulty vehicles on the road is beyond understanding. As far as possible fools must be saved from their folly, sensible people must be protected when fools run into them, the country must be preserved from the horsepower escalation and incendiary advertising of the manufacturers. To the extent that this is finally done, it will be to the credit of organizations like Consumers Union and the Cornell Aeronautical Laboratory, and politicians like Senator Ribicoff, and individual crusaders like Ralph Nader.

Dubious Dialogue

When we heard Assistant Secretary of State G. Mennen Williams testify before a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee investigating our relationship with South Africa, we knew one reason why he is going back to Michigan to run for the Senate: at least in politics he can create his own foolish positions, if he chooses, and not have to defend those created for him by the Administration.

Williams claimed that the United States has demonstrated its opposition to apartheid by placing an embargo on military sales to South Africa; but under questioning he had to admit that now we are "considering" the sale of airplanes to South Africa, and that they *could* be used for military purposes. Furthermore, he admitted, there is nothing to prevent U.S. banks from lending South Africa money to buy its arms elsewhere. Loopholes, loopholes.

Why not impose economic sanctions, as many African nations are begging us to do? Rep. Benjamin Rosenthal (D., N.Y.) touched the nerve of that question by reminding Williams that when an oil embargo against South Africa was proposed in the United Nations, "the only ones to vote against it besides South Africa were Britain, the largest investor in South Africa; the United States, second largest investor; France, third largest investor, and Spain and Portugal, which still have colonies in Africa." "If you were an African nation," he asked, "would you draw any inference from that?" Williams, squirming noticeably, conceded that our investments in South Africa are "a consideration."

Although South Africa probably has less freedom than any other Western nation, although its treatment of black citizens is, in Williams' word, "obnoxious," still the 229 U. S. firms which have invested $467 million in that country seem perfectly willing to ignore their environment. U. S. citizens who are Negro are seldom permitted visas to travel

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there; our sailors who are Negro cannot go ashore there; U. S. education films showing blacks and whites in friendly relations cannot be shown there. Nevertheless, the United States "neither encourages nor discourages" investments in that country.

Williams' explanation for this strategic indifference is one more illustration of the gross inconsistencies that damage our foreign relations:

> While cessation of investment might increase our credibility and influence with African countries in our efforts to encourage a non-violent solution, *it could seriously handicap our ability to carry on a dialogue with South Africa.* . . . The U.S., at both public and private levels, has a wide variety of cultural and scientific contacts with South Africa. . . . We hope they may have the effect of combating the tendency of South Africa *to drift off into sterile isolation.*

That is exactly what we have been imploring the Administration to consider in its possible relationships with China and Cuba: keep open the dialogue (including trade) so that they will not drift further into a sterile isolation.

Why do we act as though dialogues are good with Fascist nations but not with Communist nations? Why do we think we can persuade Fascists, but not Communists, to ease up on their victims? It makes no possible sense to keep the dialogue open to South Africa but not to Cuba and China.

Guilt by Pronunciation

According to Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs of America is a subversive outfit and should be compelled to register as a Communist-front organization. Not that Mr. Katzenbach wishes to suppress a Communist front—he throws up his hands in horror at the thought. All he wants to do is to reveal the true nature of the organization so that patriotic students (the membership is mostly on college campuses) will know they are being used as dupes. If, then, they persist in blasting their future careers, they will, in the rightist view, only get what is coming to them.

In a surprising side effect, the government's move against the DuBois Clubs has resulted in embarrassment to an organization of stunning respectability. The clubs are named after W. E. B. DuBois, the Negro historian and sociologist who was one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Dr. DuBois Americanized his name and pronounced it Doo Boys. He died in 1963 at the age of 95, after joining the Communist Party when he was 93. Using the American pronunciation, J. Edgar Hoover and other valiant Red-hunters have confused some thousands of patriots of the Hoover mentality—they thought Boys' Club of America was being execrated. There is quite a difference. The national membership of the DuBois Clubs is about 2,500; of the Boys' Club, 750,000. Also helpful in distinguishing between the two is the fact that Richard M. Nixon is the national board chairman of the Boys' Club, which receives $30 million a year in public donations. These clues, however, escaped the notice of indignant citizens who, believing devoutly in the gospel according to J. Edgar Hoover, thought that the Communists had captured their favorite organization and declared it could never again count on them for a red cent. Mr. Nixon was forced to explain and request that no more poison-pen letters and abusive telephone calls be addressed to the Boys' Club, and that their headquarters should not be dynamited.

To what extent Mr. Katzenbach will be successful in his crusade against the DuBois variety of subversion remains to be seen. He has already achieved, however inadvertently, two possible deterrents to a proliferation of membership in the DuBois Clubs: their headquarters in San Francisco was blown up, and in Brooklyn some of the members were beaten up by patriotic thugs while the police stood by and, when they joined the melee, arrested six of the DuBois boys and none of the impassioned hoodlums. It will take considerable courage to join the suspect organization henceforth and that, one may surmise, is the chief purpose of the Katzenbach move. In the right-wing view, things were getting out of hand on the campuses, and something had to be done. The neo-McCarthyism thus generated may, to be sure, get out of hand even faster than free speech on the campus, but that risk Mr. Katzenbach, impelled by Mr. Hoover, is willing to take.

AND NOW NKRUMAH

The Generals & the Future of Africa

J. KIRK SALE

Now an editor at The New York Times Magazine, *Mr. Sale has made two trips to Africa, during which he traveled through seventeen countries. He has also taught for a year at the University of Ghana (Accra) and is the author of* The Land and People of Ghana *(Lippincott).*

The coup that toppled Kwame Nkrumah last month came as a surprise, but in fact it is very much of a piece with the revolutions that have continued to rock Africa in its years of independence—and especially in the last year. Since their independence, no fewer than twenty-eight of the thirty-seven African nations have faced attempted coups; thirteen have been successful (Egypt, Sudan, Togo, Zanzibar, Rwanda, both Congos, Algeria, Dahomey, Central African Republic, Upper Volta, Nigeria, Ghana), and seven of these occurred within the last eight months. Each successful take-over was achieved by the army, except that of Congo-Brazzaville, where the army gave tacit support.

Like the others, the Ghana coup depended in most part upon the army and police, stable and powerful factors in a

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wise fluid and powerless society. Like the others, it was born of a deep dissatisfaction with politicians and nurtured by the assumption that military men, and with them civil servants, could do what others could not. Like the others, it was based on the belief—only recently proved valid—that the former colonial powers would not intervene. And like the others, it occurred about five years after the promises of independence (real or imagined) were thought to have been betrayed and a large segment of the trained young men had been disillusioned.

Ghana, then, is interesting not only in itself but for the light it sheds on the other recent revolutions. Why did it happen, what sort of army engineered it, and what should we expect of the future?

Accra radio gave the short explanation of the coup on the morning after: "This act has been made necessary by the economic and political situation in the country. The concentration of power in the hands of one man has led to the abuse of individual rights and liberties. . . . He has been running the country as if it were his own personal property. . . . He has brought Ghana to the brink of bankruptcy." This was no news to the Ghanaians.

Economically, Ghana had been going downhill for a number of years. Though it had put through some very valuable measures—the Volta Dam, the Tema harbor, vast school development, some diversification of the economy—the Nkrumah regime had dissipated an estimated $560 million worth of foreign exchange on worthless (or merely prestigious) projects and unrealizable schemes, had run up its external debt to close to $1 billion, and had bartered away its decreasingly valuable cocoa crop for Czechoslovakian suede shoes, Chinese canned goods and Russian Volga cars. What began as a brilliant demonstration of how an independent country goes about throwing off the shackles of colonialism ended up as a serious misuse of the handsome physical resources of the country and its human resources as well.

Inevitably, the failure hit directly at the people. Since 1963, the cost of living has gone up 56 per cent and has been accompanied by a series of agonizing shortages—of such vital goods to the average Ghanaian consumer as flour, tea, sugar, butter, cheese and matches, plus such semi-luxury goods as liquor, cars, refrigerators, stoves, etc. (For five months last year Ghana was without matches. The government had banned foreign imports and then discovered its own factory wasn't producing any—because, it eventually turned out, the very old man who was the only person in the country who knew how to keep together the factory's one very old dipping machine had died. Such incidents were not rare.)

Rationing had been instituted recently to ease the recurrent shortages, but it served mostly to drive up the price of ration books, along with the price of scarcities, on the black market. Moreover, the contrast between the rich and poor in the larger cities was increasingly more obvious. The poor were in many ways better off than a decade ago—though unemployment kept mounting as the parade to the cities grew—but the rich grew more and more extravagant; as Agricultural Minister Krobo Edusi put it, "socialism doesn't mean that if you've made a lot of money you can't keep it." And among the rich, it was quickly noted, were not only the officials of Nkrumah's CPP but also his personal friends and family members (one cousin ran the capital's most opulent night club) and, toward the end, Kwame Nkrumah, man of the people, himself. Nkrumah's official residence, Christiansborg Castle, was rebuilt a few years ago at the cost of $1 million and stood in shining splendor over the surrounding township of Christiansborg—the most squalid slum in all of Accra.

And just at the time that the economic picture was bleakest last year—food in short supply, jobs scarce, luxuries nonexistent—up went a Palace of African Unity built for a one-week conference at a cost variously put between $10 million and $35 million.

Other countries have weathered economic hard times without revolutions—why not Ghana? The answer is politics, the other half of the revolutionary equation.

First, Nkrumah's growing dictatorship and arbitrary rule alienated those who would have been most valuable in guiding public opinion through the economic crisis and devising sensible ways to get out of it: the intellectuals, the civil servants, the considerable middle class. Ghana was not a police state by any means, but its "preventive detention" of any one at any time, without trial, created an aura of fear and suspicion in which only the very secure and very old could afford to offer advice.

Second, Nkrumah openly cut himself off from his original source of power, the masses, and retired behind the walls of Flagstaff House, where his feelings of loneliness and unreality grew day by day. A less megalomaniac leader, one less remote from reality, might have successfully asked the people to tighten their belts for the greater glory of Ghana. But Nkrumah seemed hardly to care about their plight and let the party newspapers listlessly make the admonitions. Nor did the party sycophants around him try to wake him up—how would you explain to a "messianic majesty" and "national fount of honor" that the economy was collapsing and that grumbling, not only of stomach but of mouth, was mounting?

Finally, Nkrumah blocked any possibility of peaceful change or remedy. He was President for life and his party had absolute control over the governmental system. You cannot vote down a leader in Nkrumah's position; he is impervious to votes. There was no legal way for the discontented elements of the society, including the army and the police, to express their unhappiness or hopes for change. As a result, frustration spread, and revolution took shape.

That, then, was the dry tinder: economic collapse, political stagnation, mounting discontent. The sparks to light it came from the army.

Nkrumah had always been worried about his army. He knew, as do all dictators, that it represented the one source of power strong enough to fell him. But he didn't want to do without it: armies are prestigious, good for ceremonies, useful to guard borders against invaders (or more likely smugglers), valuable to keep internal order, and not bad at building roads. So Nkrumah first tried to keep the army under British control, even after independence, knowing full well that no British general would lead his troops against the commander in chief; would, in fact, do every-

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Drawing from life

Kwame Nkrumah

thing to put down a rebellion against him if it arose. But during the Congo turmoil Nkrumah came under immense pressure to discharge his British officers (Britain was, after all, an obvious imperialist power in the Congo) and in September, 1961, was forced to replace reliable old General Alexander with a Ghanaian general, Steve Otu, a hail-fellow kind of officer and not much of a threat.

But behind Otu were a number of more hard-minded officers, one of whom, Joseph Arthur Ankrah, was made Army Chief of Staff when Otu became Defense Chief. Nkrumah was never quite happy about Ankrah, and even had doubts about Otu; they were kept under close watch and forced to go through regular loyalty drills for four years, until last July Nkrumah dismissed them both and replaced them with men more "socialist-minded."

Apparently neither Otu nor Ankrah had done anything specifically hostile, though it had become fairly common knowledge around Accra that Ankrah was less than enchanted with Nkrumah and had the temperament to do something about it. Nkrumah was apparently acting only to forestall trouble from the army, but inevitably he created discontent among Ankrah's followers and uncertainty among the other officers.

Three months after sacking Ankrah and Otu, Nkrumah proposed the formation of a "people's militia," ostensibly to be trained for an invasion of Rhodesia. Whether or not Nkrumah really intended to set up a militia personally loyal to him as a counterforce to the army, the army must certainly have thought that was his plan, and armies traditionally resist such invasion of their provinces (cf., Sukarno and Indonesia). And the militia was to be added to the already extant threat of Nkrumah's personal guard, commanded by a Soviet-trained colonel, advised by a dozen Russian officers, entirely armed and trained by the Russians (Nkrumah even encouraged them to use the Russian goose step) and quite free of army control.

That threat was the first spark; at the turn of the year came the second and decisive one. Military take-overs had succeeded with remarkable ease in six other countries. The politicians had proved powerless, lacking either the arms or popular support even to attempt a counterrevolution; the general populace accepted the coups joyously, or at least indifferently.

And no European power had intervened to thwart the recent revolts, as France had admittedly done at least ten times between 1960 and 1964 (most notably in Gabon in February, 1964), and as Britain had moved into East Africa in January, 1964. This was a clear demonstration that the former colonial powers were unwilling to get entangled in repeated internal troubles in their former colonies. The army men noted this hands-off attitude with some satisfaction.

Just five weeks after Nigeria's successful coup, at a time when both Nkrumah and his army commander were out of the country, the army sprang its revolution. Resistance was slight, popular opinion and up-to-date arms were on its side, and within a day the army (in coalition with the police) was in power.

Who are these men who have come to power in Ghana? In broad terms they are very much like the men who have led the other African revolutions. The African officers are Western-trained and Western-educated. Their values and goals are strongly influenced by the West. They regard the army's role approximately as a Western general would—a nonpolitical, nonideological force subservient to civil control—and not, by contrast, as a Chinese would.

Unlike the usual Latin American officer, they are not men of rich families or of entrenched interests who tend to be ultraconservative. They come for the most part from the lower bourgeoisie or better than average peasantry, a background not markedly different in custom and training from that of the middle-level civil servants, small businessmen or secondary-school teachers. They are educated, but usually only through secondary school; a number have gone to Sandhurst or St. Cyr, but most have had no more than a six-month course at metropolitan cadet schools plus wide experience in the army itself.

Almost all the older officers fought with the colonial powers in World War II and after; Generals Soglo (Dahomey), Bokassa (Central African Republic) and Lamizana (Upper Volta) served under the French in Indo-China; Ironsi (Nigeria) and Ankrah were in the West African army during the war and led troops in the Congo.

But they are not to be thought of as capitalist lackeys or bourgeois conservatives. They have no ideology to speak of, but they are—as military men often seem to be—dedicated nationalists. They have delighted, especially in Ghana, Algeria and the Congo, to display outwardly the vanities of independence (with new uniforms and equipment, ceremonial duties and international service). They have known race prejudice and ill treatment under colonial masters (it is only recently that they were *allowed* to be officers) and feel as strongly as any politician that the African nations must stand on their own feet, often with a thumb to the nose. If they do not like Nkrumah's socialism or Abubakar's

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capitalism—and they do not—they have no clear system to offer instead. They are not ideologues but military men.

And their strong point is getting things done. They have rebelled not because they want to replace socialism with capitalism or vice versa, but because they want to replace corruption with honesty, mismanagement with military efficiency, chaos with order, stagnation with progress. Whether they succeed or not, they have acted to make something better of their nations in the only way they know.

Ghana itself has perhaps the best army in all of black Africa. It has had a budget of about $35 million a year—roughly 12 per cent of the total—a military allocation larger than that of any other tropical African nation except the Congo; and it is generally thought to have the best training, men and equipment south of North Africa.

It has about 9,000 men (making it the fifth largest after Egypt, Ethiopia, Congo and the Sudan), some 60 per cent from the backward northern regions. Its officers, however, are almost all southern men, most of them in their 30s and none older than 50, all commissioned since 1950. Since independence, rapid promotion has created an officer strength of about 300, but more recently an inevitable "promotional freeze" has lessened the chances of advancement and caused some unhappiness in the ranks.

Major General Ankrah, now head of Ghana's National Liberation Council, is typical of the Ghanaian—and African—pattern. He was born in 1915 in Accra, his parents being members of the Ga tribe which originally settled the area. He went through secondary school in Accra, then joined the civil service as a teacher (1938), and was immediately seconded to the Education Corps of the Royal West African Frontier Force.

He was a private in this force when the war broke out in 1939 and rose to Warrant Officer II, in the meantime making a name for himself as a boxing champion and a fine soccer forward. Two years after the end of the war he was commissioned, only the second African to be made an officer by the British.

In 1960, he went to the Congo as commander of the 1st Battalion of the Ghana Infantry under the United Nations. The unit did a very impressive job in Kasai province under very difficult conditions (conditions so difficult, in fact, that one battalion mutinied). Ankrah is described by his then commander, General Alexander, as "probably the toughest fighting soldier in Ghana. He is incredibly ruthless in situations which demand violent action."

On the New Year's List of 1961, Ankrah was awarded the first Ghana Military Cross for his Congo service. Later that year he was appointed a Brigadier General and then in November, 1961, partly at Otu's insistence, was made Army Chief of Staff, a post he held until last July.

He says his hobbies are "football, fishing and reading"; his intellect is not thought to be remarkable, but he has a distinct way with his men, a blend of paternalism and autocracy that one finds in the best of Ghana's chiefs. He is reported to have three wives and twenty-two children, also in the fine chiefly tradition.

Little is known—even by the Ghanaians themselves—of the men around Ankrah, except J. W. K. Harley, the Commissioner of Police, who was appointed by Nkrumah in January, 1964, to replace a man suspected of having had a hand in the assassination attempt on the President earlier that month. Harley came in with many protestations of loyalty to Nkrumah and to the wonders of socialism. He allowed the police to play an active part in a much publicized drive to stamp out prostitution, close up European- and Lebanese-run night clubs, and in general to force on Ghana a socialist puritanism. But in time he became of the same mind as the army leaders, and his 8,000-man force was a vital element in supporting the coup.

What is the Westerner to make of this emergence to power of military men in Africa? In most quarters recently the opinion has been that it is all to the good — I've even heard one Ford Foundation official claim that "the army is the most democratic force in Africa" and argue, as many have done, that its efficiency and drive is the happy answer to Africa's problems.

In one sense, it *is* salutary to have the army in power. The old order — whether the dictatorship of Nkrumah, the corruption of Balewa (Nigeria), the bumbling of Dacko (Central African Republic) or the self-interest of Kasavubu (Congo)—is out, and the new cannot be any worse, at least at the beginning. Indeed, it is likely that in many immediate ways it will be better: it has aligned with the civil service to proclaim honesty and efficiency over politics and corruption, and by habit and training expects to get things done. The job won't be as easy as all that, as Mobutu in the Congo has now found out. Efficiency on Western patterns is simply not highly prized by the African populace, and honesty is only relative in cultures where nepotism and favor granting are traditionally effective instruments. But at least the drive is there.

In addition, the very fact that so many armies have taken over is a constant threat and reminder to politicians in power not to take things too easily — a lesson not lost on Uganda's Obote.

But a general is, after all, a general. The military mind that we know in the West is not so different from the military mind in Africa (the one, be it remembered, trained the other), and it is not, as we know, an especially open mind. Not that the generals will want to launch invasions or oppose fluoridation; but their patterns of thought are routinized and closed to novelty, their conception of jobs to be done is narrow, their notion of options is small. It would be impossible, for example, to think of Arthur Ankrah appreciating the distant but profound importance of the Volta River scheme; Nkrumah, for all his faults, understood it. Nor can one imagine General Ironsi sitting down to persuade a political opponent to subdue his personal designs for the good of the nation, as Balewa, for all his faults, did. We cannot expect from the military mind the grand designs and visions that Africa will need.

And this mind inevitably thinks in terms of force rather than persuasion, rigidity rather than fluidity; if politics is the art of the possible, soldiering is the science of the unreasonable. Suppose the army cannot get the efficiency it wants—does it cajole or does it force? Suppose directing a country is not quite as easy as directing a regiment—is the response orders and discipline, or is it rethinking and retooling? Nasser, it is now thought, had notions of turning the country back to the civilians (Latin American gen-

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erals have occasionally had the same idea) but he came around, not surprisingly, to believe that the civilians were inept and that the military was the only force fit for the job. It is the military mind at work.

This mind, at least in Africa, also has a very limited notion of foreign affairs, and in fact the British-trained officers are imbued with the idea that military men should keep so far out of politics as not even to know East from West. The result of this has been, as we have seen, a naïveté about the cold war and, as a concomitant, an easy assumption that Russians and Chinese are up to no good. The generals of Dahomey, Central African Republic and Burundi simply kicked out the Chinese; the Nigerians, Congolese and Upper Voltaians have pledged to keep out or severely limit Communist delegations; and the Ghanaians are now sending hundreds of Communists packing, including some who were apparently performing much needed technical services.

This has all been greeted with much praise in the West, and you could hear the editorial writers heave a sigh of relief that the military men had brought the continent back to its senses and put it in the Western camp. But it would be absolute folly for Africa to make of its neutralism a wall from which the Eastern blocs were excluded. It would be folly because it would cut off a very real source of aid; because it would tend to make these nations client states of the West; and, most important, because it would lessen, rather than increase, the amount of Western and especially American aid, since our obvious and stated policy is to send in money where there is a "Communist threat" and to be indifferent where there is none. (On this last point, it is apparent that our interest in Africa has sharply declined since about 1962, when the Russians decided that their full-scale thrust into Africa was premature and began limiting their support. In fact, State Department policy makers cheerfully acknowledge that sub-Saharan Africa, of all areas in the world, has the lowest priority because it is in least danger of Communist subversion.)

I see no reason, therefore, to greet the military take-overs with an enthusiasm stripped of previous distaste for military regimes. It is proper to argue that the military has recently performed some very real services to Africa; but to say then that they are therefore champions of democracy, the panacea for economic ills and, especially, a bulwark of Western support, is dangerous and absurd. Indeed, whatever their short-term value, it will be the better for Africa—and for America—to see them safely back in their barracks.

And so what of the future? First, it is obvious that Nkrumah does not want to take all this lying down, but he really has no very good way of standing up to it. It is possible that from a base in Guinea he could use whatever money he has stashed away (and his opponents say it runs to the millions) to form a guerrilla army to invade Ghana through the "back door," the unguarded wastelands of the north. But the logistics problem is immense—none of the nations bordering Ghana has the slightest affection for the ex-"champion of Africa"—and neither Touré nor the other Nkrumah supporters can have much taste for getting their armies into an all-out war with Ghana's. It is much more likely that we shall see Nkrumah as professor of Neo-Colonialism at Conakry University than as General of a Liberation Brigade.

Nonetheless, we must not forget Nkrumah's very real and very emotional appeal in potent quarters throughout the continent. He has built up a tremendous reservoir of adulation among the politically awakened, especially in the southern nations where he often seemed to be the only leader prepared to do anything about helping them, the only one to cut through the cant about "liberating the south" with guns, money and refuge.

It is unlikely that this good will can be translated into action to put Nkrumah back on his throne, but it will remain an important ideological force for many years. The Ghanaian leaders should not ignore the influence of this "Nkrumahism," for, like Bonapartism, it has come to stand for certain noble aims and practical victories and, like Bonapartism, may become an idealized dream from which the horrors are left out. It will linger in the minds of the peasants if subsequent regimes do not live up to their promises.

Beyond the issue of Nkrumah himself, there is the question of what the military men can actually accomplish. At least for the next year we can expect considerable progress on the economic side: the closing of useless government bureaus, embassies, corporations and industries, and the efficient management of others. The money saved by eliminating Ghana's silly show places, rationalizing Nigeria's regional industry, working instead of fighting in the Congo, and cutting corruption in Dahomey and Upper Volta, can bolster the faltering economies.

Also, the dedication and eagerness that a new regime brings will increase efficiency and production. And with the cooperation of now unfettered civil servants, overall economic plans can be drawn up to chart progress on

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realistic rather than political grounds, spur capital investment at home and from overseas, and spell out the necessary but unpleasant tasks of relocation, retrenchment and reorganization. The military will do everything it can to improve the lot of the common man—at least at the start.

But will the civilians be back? The new regimes have all said so (even Mobutu, though he is setting the rather comfortable deadline of five years), but these pledges have a way of getting pushed off year after year as new crises develop (as they will). Not that the generals necessarily want to stay on—in fact Soglo in Dahomey has tried twice to step down—but they'll think they must. We can say, with the cynicism of experience, that the prospects are not good for civilian rule (Pakistan and the Sudan are exceptional) and that it will take all the pressure of liberal opinion, both there and outside, to make it come about.

Finally, what about the shock waves from the recent coups reverberating in other countries? It is almost certain that other nations will follow the pattern. Gabon, Tunisia, Liberia, Guinea, Cameroun, Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika have all already faced threats from their armies, and there is no reason to think that attempts will not be made again —especially in Liberia, Uganda and Guinea. The military in Guinea, Mali, Egypt, Congo-Brazzaville and Tanganyika is much more conservative, to the extent that it is political at all, than the politicians in power, and this suggests a potential tinderbox, especially if the economic life worsens. Only little Gambia seems relatively safe from a military take-over—it has no army.

The problem, of course, is a difficult one for the civilian ruler. Does he build up the army, both to keep it quiet (soldiers love promotions and power) and to aid the economy (armies siphon off the unemployed and are very helpful in infrastructural development)? Or does he try to keep it small and forget about guarding his borders, keeping internal order, building national prestige and fulfilling international obligations? And if he builds the army, what does he use as a counterforce to keep it down on the base—a personal guard, or a people's militia (both anathema to the professional soldiers), places in the cabinet (the pattern in Latin America), occasional wars (as in Egypt), political control and indoctrination (as in Russia and China)?

It is a difficult tightrope to walk, and African leaders will have to use all their considerable skills to keep from tumbling. It is up to the rest of the world to do everything to help them. The threat is always there. Kwame Nkrumah knew of it: "When a social system . . . becomes . . . diseased," he wrote a few weeks ago, "a point is reached where the only alternative to constitutional change is a violent revolution." As it was, so it shall be.

JUSTICE BLACK AT EIGHTY

THE COMMON SENSE OF FREEDOM

NORMAN REDLICH

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When Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black celebrated his 80th birthday on February 27, he could look back with satisfaction on twenty-nine turbulent years of Court service. Few men in the history of the United States Supreme Court have lived to see the acceptance of so many views originally spoken in dissent. In fact, the substance of so many of Justice Black's positions have now become the law of the land that it is easy to forget the great personal courage, moral stature and intellectual strength that he displayed during the 1940s and early 1950s when, along with Justice William O. Douglas, withstood the internal pressures which the cold war imposed.

Positions once regarded as extreme, such as his contention that the entire Bill of Rights was made applicable against state infringement by the Fourteenth Amendment, have won gradual acceptance. On cases involving First Amendment freedoms, Justice Black today rarely finds it necessary to speak in dissent, although the Court has not yet adopted his "absolute" view of First Amendment guarantees. And even Justice Black's severest critics recognize him as a judicial scholar of the highest rank.

No jurist, philosopher, political writer or legal scholar in the history of this country has compiled a more thoroughly documented and inspiringly written defense of First Amendment guarantees of political and religious freedoms than has this largely self-taught man who still refers to himself as a "rather backward country fellow." This "backward country fellow" has a mind which, during a recent six-hour continuous interview, ranged over a complete spectrum of constitutional issues. His grasp of constitutional law and history is dazzling, and his manner of disagreeing remains so gentle and skillful that his adversary may easily find himself intellectually disarmed before the struggle is joined.

I had hoped, for example, to discuss at length Justice Black's dissent in the recent Connecticut birth control case. Black's opinion had argued that while the law was silly, there was nothing in the Constitution to prevent Connecticut from enacting it. During the course of his opinion he had indicated his disagreement with an article I had written a few years earlier on the same subject. As we settled down to discuss the case, however, Justice Black said that the case was not as important as the precedent which he thought it contained. He was concerned that the same approach which permits judges to create new rights in the Constitution will also permit them to remove rights which are plainly there. Thus an opinion, which I was prepared to defend on grounds that it expanded the area of constitutional protection, was skillfully presented to me as one which posed a threat to individual rights. Small wonder that in his days as a Birmingham trial lawyer he suffered few defeats in jury cases.

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Justice Black at 80 scorns any suggestion of retirement. And well he might. He remains at the height of his intellectual powers and the one note of regret he sounded during our interview was that the previous day's heavy rain had prevented his daily game of tennis.

Despite his accomplishments, he does not look backward. I asked him whether he was satisfied with the direction the Court has taken during his nearly three decades of service. He replied that he was, but without dwelling on the past, said that he looked forward to the day when the liberties of Americans depended less on the individual predilections of judges and more on strict adherence to the fixed commands of the Bill of Rights. With that combination of personal warmth and emotional fervor which he exudes when he discusses the Bill of Rights, even in the relaxed atmosphere of his living room, he said that our personal freedoms distinguish this country from all others. They are too important to be left to the whim of judges, or legislators, or Presidents or "all of them put together."

Hugo Black's present position of eminence has not been easily achieved. In the public mind the image of Justice Black was clouded for many years by the circumstances surrounding his appointment in 1937. As a United States Senator from Alabama, Black had vigorously supported President Roosevelt's Court-packing bill. He joined in attacking the so-called "nine old men," a majority of whom had provoked this country's most precipitous constitutional crisis by invalidating key New Deal legislation during 1935 and 1936. He accused the Court majority of writing its own conservative economic and social philosophy into the Constitution, thereby usurping the legislative function of Congress and the state legislatures. When in August of 1937, Roosevelt filled the first Court vacancy available to him with Senator Hugo Black, the conservative critics of the President turned their wrath on his appointee. Roosevelt's liberal supporters defended the appointment, only to find their defense blunted by the revelation that Black had been a member of the Ku Klux Klan.

Black had indeed joined the Klan in 1923, a decision for which he has never apologized. He did not regard it as a hate group in 1923, and it was inconceivable to anyone who knew Hugo Black in 1937, or at any other time in his life, that he harbored any racial or religious prejudice. Actually, he had resigned from the Klan in 1925, but shortly after winning the Democratic nomination for United States Senator in 1926, Black received a so-called "grand passport," and this was cited by critics as evidence of Klan membership. In an eloquent radio address Black said, "My words and acts are a matter of public record. I believe that my record as a Senator refutes every implication of racial or religious intolerance. It shows that I was of that group of liberal Senators who have consistently fought for the civil, economic and religious rights of all Americans without regard to race or creed."

Because of the connection between his appointment and the Roosevelt Court-packing fight, and because of the Klan episode, Black was handicapped at the start of his judicial service by a popular belief that his appointment was a political reward for faithful Senate service to the President. Some assumed that his Klan background augured a conservative position on civil liberties. Largely overlooked was the fact that Black had been an extraordinarily successful trial lawyer in Alabama and had developed a reputation as one of the Senate's most industrious, well-read and able members. Today, almost three decades later, one still hears, even from people who should know better, expressions of surprise concerning Black's civil libertarian views, his legal skills and his intellectual power. Of course, twenty-eight years on the bench have developed these skills enormously, and his opinions show an increasingly wide range of scholarship. But Hugo Black wrote scholarly opinions during his freshman term on the Court, and his constitutional views have from the outset demonstrated an intellectual consistency which is striking for a jurist whose service on the Court has spanned so long and eventful an era.

To the observer who mistakes obscurity for depth, Hugo Black's exposition of his constitutional philosophy frequently appears to lack profundity. For example, when in his first term on the Court he wrote the opinion which held that in federal criminal trials an indigent defendant was entitled to court-assigned counsel, Black said that defense counsel was necessary in order "to complete the court." A simple thought —a lawyer for an indigent defendant was as important as the prosecutor and the judge; without a lawyer the court was not "complete." But judges, lawyers and most law professors failed to view the problem in these terms. There ensued a twenty-five-year period of judicial confusion and untold miscarriages of justice until the Supreme Court finally accorded this right to state criminal defendants in the famous case of *Gideon* v. *Wainwright*. During this time the Supreme Court, instead of following Justice Black's simple formulation, looked instead to such factors as the defendant's age, education, seriousness of the crime, etc. All this was quite irrelevant under the concept originally set forth by Black.

Recently, countless foundations, universities, government study groups and bar associations have become aware of the inequality between rich and poor in the administration of criminal justice. But in 1942, only a few years after his appointment to the bench, Justice Black said that the Constitution could not permit a system which "subjects innocent men to increased dangers of conviction merely because of their poverty." Such a practice, in his words, "seems to me to defeat the promise of our democratic society to provide equal justice under the law." And he developed this theme further in 1956 when, in a decision which required that states provide indigent defendants with a transcript for their appeals, he wrote, "There can be no equal justice where the kind of trial a man gets depends on the amount of money he has." As Black's opinions demonstrate, these positions were reached after great scholarly research, but in every instance he managed to refine his thinking to the point where he could express a profound concept in very simple terms.

No aspect of Hugo Black's constitutional position has provoked more criticism than his First Amendment philosophy. During the past forty years, one of the most troublesome questions to face the Supreme Court has been the determination of conditions under which spoken or written words may be punished in light of the First Amendment's unequivocal command: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech; or of

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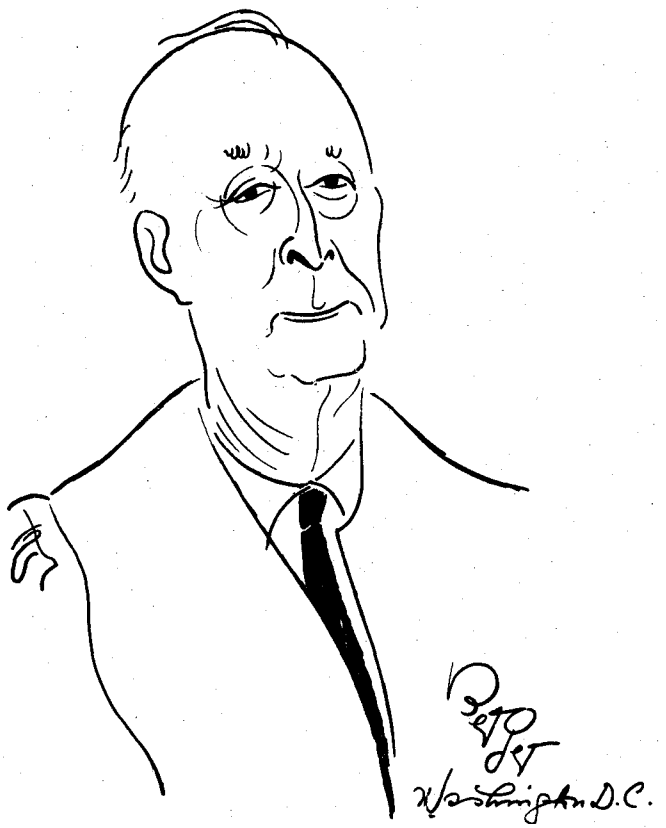
the press; or of the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." Fraudulent advertising, for example, can take the form of speech, as can a conspiracy to violate the antitrust laws. We have statutes against incitement to riot, breaches of the peace, and against the holding of demonstrations in particular places such as parks or streets.

In essence there are really two aspects to the problem. One is definitional—an attempt to discern whether a person is engaging in conduct or in speech. The other is a balancing question—a determination as to whether something which is admittedly speech should nevertheless be restrained. When Justice Black states that the protections of the First Amendment are "absolute," he is speaking about



the second problem, not the first. In his James Madison Lecture, delivered at New York University on February 17, 1960, he said: "I shall not attempt to discuss the wholly different and complex problem of the marginal scope of each individual amendment as applied to the particular facts of particular cases." When asked, in a public interview, whether it would be constitutional to prosecute someone who falsely shouted "fire!" in a theatre, Black replied, "If a person creates a disorder in a theatre, they would get him there not because of *what* he hollered but because he *hollered*. They would get him not because of any views he had but because they thought he did not have any views that they wanted to hear there."

But when we move to the second aspect of the question —the balancing aspect—Justice Black takes his stand against those who claim, through one verbal formulation or another, that something which is admittedly speech can be suppressed in the public interest. "It is my belief," he wrote, "that there are *'absolutes'* in our Bill of Rights, and that they were put there on purpose by men who knew what words meant, and meant their prohibitions to be 'absolutes.' "

It is important to view Justice Black's position in its historical perspective. Whatever may have been the merits of Justice Holmes's famous "clear and present danger" test, it was apparent that under the cold-war pressures of the 1950s Holmes's exception was swallowing up the rule. When, in 1951, the Supreme Court upheld the Smith Act's ban against teaching or advocating the violent overthrow of the government, the clear and present danger had become nothing more than a reasonable belief on the part of a court that the attempt to overthrow the government might come at some indefinite time in the future. This erosion of the protection of the First Amendment reached its culmination in the late 1950s when the Court upheld admitted restrictions on free speech under a so-called "balancing" test whereby courts were supposed to weigh the interests of the public against the right of the individual.

If that is all the First Amendment means, then Justice Black's observation is irrefutable:

> The great danger of the judiciary balancing process is that in times of emergency and stress it gives the Government the power to do what it thinks necessary to protect itself, regardless of the rights of individuals. If the need is great, the right of Government can always be said to outweigh the rights of the individual. If "balancing" is accepted as the test, it would be hard for any conscientious judge to hold otherwise in times of dire need.

Black's position comes down simply to this: that the framers of the First Amendment did the "balancing" when they decided that "no law" should be adopted which abridges free speech, press, religion and other First Amendment guarantees. Whether in written decisions, on the lecture platform or in informal conversation, Black strikes the same note—"no law" does not mean "some law."

In the midst of a highly technical discussion of certain Supreme Court decisions, Justice Black said to me: "Of course, professors and even deans and many judges like to tinker with the words in the Constitution. But I don't know why they want to change it. It's a good Constitution. At least it's the one I swore to uphold."

Comments such as that lead some people to charge that Black's approach is "simplistic," but his decisions in the First Amendment area actually demonstrate a great grasp of English and American history. In 1963, Irving Dilliard compiled Black's leading opinions in a volume entitled *One Man's Stand for Freedom*. The Justice's historical analysis has convinced him that the framers of our Constitution did not want the English system of legislative omnipotence. Not satisfied merely with a government of limited powers, "the people of this country . . . demanded more precise and unequivocal limitations upon the powers of government and obtained the Bill of Rights, the central provisions of which were the First Amendment guarantees of complete religious and political freedom."

His conversations, like his opinions, are studded with examples of political and religious suppression, which have always been justified by the familiar "balancing" of the interests of the state against the rights of the individual. "That doctrine is not a new one," wrote Black. "In fact,

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history shows that it has been the excuse for every repressive measure that government has ever seen fit to adopt."

The range of attacks against First Amendment freedoms during the post-World War II era is unmatched by any other period of comparable length in the nation's history. Black's response has been a persistent, unyielding, scholarly and inspiring defense of First Amendment freedoms—"without any 'ifs' or 'buts' or 'whereases.' "

Dissenting from a decision that upheld a statute prohibiting newspapers or moving pictures from exposing members of a particular group to "contempt" or "derision," Black said, "History indicates that urges to do good have led to the burning of books and even to the burning of 'witches.' "

Dissenting from the decision to uphold the Smith Act's ban on advocacy of forcible overthrow of the government, he said: "I cannot agree that the First Amendment permits us to sustain laws suppressing freedom of speech and press on the basis of Congress' or our own notions of mere 'reasonableness.' Such a doctrine waters down the First Amendment so that it amounts to little more than an admonition to Congress."

Agreeing with the Court's invalidation of an Oklahoma loyalty oath for public employees, he said: "Tyrannical totalitarian governments cannot safely allow their people to speak with complete freedom. I believe with the Framers that our free Government can."

And in perhaps his greatest First Amendment dissent (in the *Barenblatt* case) where the Court decided that the First Amendment did not prevent Congress from inquiring into an individual's alleged Communist affiliation, he proclaimed: "Our Constitution assumes that the common sense of the people and their attachment to our country will enable them, after free discussion, to withstand ideas that are wrong. . . . Unless we can rely on these qualities—if, in short, we begin to punish speech—we cannot honestly proclaim ourselves to be a free Nation and we have lost what the Founders of this land risked their lives and their sacred honor to defend."

Those present when Justice Black delivered his James Madison Lecture at New York University in February, 1960, will not soon forget the caustic humor with which he drove home his point by applying the "balancing" test to another provision in the Constitution—that which provides that private property shall not "be taken for public use, without just compensation." Using the same type of reasoning that the Court majority was then employing to "balance away" the provision of the First Amendment, Black set forth a wholly imaginary judicial opinion of Judge X upholding the power of the United States to seize land without compensation if the property is required for the defense establishment. As the audience rocked with laughter, Black read his "opinion" with a mock solemnity that grew more pompous as he rolled along to the conclusion:

> Plaintiff contends, however, that the Fifth Amendment's provision about compensation is so absolute a command that Congress is wholly without authority to violate it, however great this nation's emergency and peril may be. I must reject this contention. We must never forget that it is a constitution we are expounding.
>
> And a constitution, unlike ordinary statutes, must endure for ages; it must be adapted to changing conditions and the needs of changing communities. Without such capacity for change, our Constitution would soon be outmoded and become a dead letter. Therefore its words must never be read as rigid absolutes. The Bill of Rights' commands, no more than any others, can stay the hands of Congress from doing that which the general welfare imperatively demands. When two great constitutional provisions like these conflict—as here the power to make war conflicts with the requirements for just compensation—it becomes the duty of courts to weigh the constitutional right of an individual to compensation against the power of Congress to wage a successful war.
>
> While the question is not without doubt, I have no hesitation in finding the challenged Congressional Act valid. Driven by the absolute necessity to protect the nation from foreign aggression, the national debt has risen to billions of dollars. The Government's credit is such that interest rates have soared. Under these circumstances, Congress was rationally entitled to find that if it paid for all the lands it needs it might bankrupt the nation and render it helpless in its hour of greatest need. Weighing as I must the loss the individual will suffer because he has to surrender his land to the nation without compensation against the great public interest in conducting war, I hold the Act valid. A decree will be entered accordingly.

To describe a constitutional protection as "absolute" does not, of course, always result in easy decision-making. One of Justice Black's most difficult and controversial decisions upheld the power of a state to provide bus transportation for parochial school students against the claim that the practice violated the establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment. Black's opinion remains today the most authoritative statement on the meaning of that clause. In applying the "absolute" rule to the facts of the case, however, Black concluded that the state was merely aiding children and not benefiting a religious institution, a conclusion with which four Justices bitterly disagreed, although there was complete agreement on Black's interpretation of the constitutional provision. This interpretation—that the First Amendment prohibits aid of any kind to any and all religious establishments—was the basis of the Court's 8-to-1 decision in 1962 invalidating New York's school prayer. Needless to say, it was Black who wrote that opinion which was criticized by many and read by few. If the critics had read it, they would have found it to be a stirring statement of religious faith written by a profoundly religious man.

Justice Black has dissented against many injustices. I asked which of these cases linger in his memory. He mentioned among others that of George Anastaplo, a brilliant young law-school graduate, with a distinguished military record. Anastaplo told the Illinois State Bar Committee on Character and Fitness that he believed in the right of revolution and that the question of his possible membership in allegedly subversive organizations was not pertinent to his qualifications to practice law. There was not one shred of evidence reflecting adversely on Anastaplo's character or reputation. Nevertheless, because of his views on revolution and his refusal to discuss possible membership in organizations, he was denied admission to the bar and the Supreme Court, in a 5-to-4 decision, sustained the refusal. Black dissented and said of Anastaplo:

> The one and only time in which he has come into conflict with the Government is when he refused to answer the questions put to him by the Committee about his beliefs

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and associations. And I think the record clearly shows that conflict resulted, not from any fear on Anastaplo's part to divulge his own political activities, but from a sincere, and in my judgment correct, conviction that the preservation of this country's freedom depends upon adherence to the Bill of Rights. The very most that can fairly be said against Anastaplo's position in this entire matter is that he took too much of the responsibility of preserving that freedom upon himself. . . .

Black resents the charge that he is a "judicial activist." When he was appointed to the bench, he told a colleague that he was prepared to declare laws unconstitutional, but not for the same reasons which impelled the anti-New Deal justices whom he had so sharply criticized. It is this difference which explains the essence of Black's view of a Supreme Court Justice's proper role in our government.

When the constitutional command is clear, it is the duty of a judge to enforce that command and not to substitute standards not found in the Constitution—such as "overriding public interest," or "clear and present danger" or any of the other judicially manufactured excuses for bypassing the Bill of Rights. Similarly, since Black believes that historically the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment intended to make the Bill of Rights applicable to the states, Black rejects the idea that judges should invalidate only those state acts which "shock the conscience," or violate a "scheme of ordered liberty." Phrases such as these are too susceptible of judicial erosion in times of crisis. By applying the precise commands of the Bill of Rights, Justice Black believes courts will deal with the definitional aspects of these provisions, rather than with the wholly different and amorphous question of whether a particular practice offends a particular judge's concepts of fundamental justice.

Because of these beliefs, some of Black's bitterest dissents have been directed against an interpretation of due process, prevalent in the 1940s and 1950s, which gave the judiciary the power to substitute their own notions of fairness for the more specific language of the Bill of Rights. And he has lived to see the principal features of his position vindicated. While the Court has not agreed that the full Bill of Rights is incorporated in the Fourteenth Amendment, it has accepted Black's alternate thesis that whenever a right found in the Bill of Rights is made applicable to the states, it should have the same meaning against the states as against the federal government. For example, the protection against unreasonable searches and seizures now provides the same protection against state infringement as it does against violation by the United States. Since most of the provisions of the Bill of Rights have now been held applicable against state infringement, Black has won the substance, if not the form, of his long battle.

Some of Black's most ringing dissents of recent years have been against his liberal colleagues, which has prompted some question as to whether Black has shifted toward a more conservative position. Actually, careful readers of Black's opinions would have had no difficulty in predicting his dissenting votes. When the Court invalidated the Connecticut birth control law last year on grounds that a right of marital privacy was "peripheral" to, or part of, a "penumbra" of rights in the Bill of Rights, Black objected vehemently that the majority was following the exact route of the conservative majority in the 1930s—invalidating legislation of which they disapproved without constitutional authority.

Similarly, he bitterly dissented from last year's decision to apply certain new decisions prospectively only, thereby keeping imprisoned those defendants who had been convicted under procedures found to be unconstitutional in later cases. To Black these decisions represented a great retreat from a constitutional scheme which relies on the written words of the Constitution rather than on the "shocked consciences" of judges.

Some followers of the Court were surprised by Black's recent dissents upholding convictions of sit-in demonstrators. Black, however, was restating his basic theme—a court which reaches out to find rights which do not exist may some day permit the contraction of rights which are already there.

When a man of Justice Black's stature reaches the age of 80, his place in history is inevitably assayed. Few would deny to the Justice his place with Madison, Jefferson, Hughes, Holmes, Brandeis and, in a more modern context, Douglas, Warren and Brennan, as one who has risen to the defense of individual liberties in times of crisis.

It was the late Edmond Cahn, however, who placed Justice Black in what may well be his correct historical perspective when he linked Black to John Marshall, our greatest Chief Justice. Seeking to determine what makes a judge truly great, Cahn said: "As a crisis approaches, some man who might otherwise remain relatively unimportant and obscure discovers a word, a phrase, a sentence in a basic text that history and legal tradition have placed in his hands. He reads, kindles, ignites, and bursts into flames of zeal and resolution. The torch of his spirit leads first a few, then the vast majority of his countrymen—like a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night—toward freedom, equality, and social justice."

For Marshall the words were found in the provision of the Constitution declaring that the Constitution of the United States was "the supreme law of the land." For Hugo Black the words were found in the First Amendment. If, at the outset of our national experience, John Marshall's opinions forged a republic, Hugo Black's in our day have expressed that republic's highest justification for survival.

Whatever may be the present judgments concerning his place in history, the Justice himself is too keen a student of history not to realize that in the final analysis his place will be determined by the direction in which the country moves. He could well have been speaking of his own place in history when he said, at the conclusion of his great dissent in the *Barenblatt* case: "Ultimately all the questions in this case really boil down to one—whether we as a people will try fearfully and futilely to preserve democracy by adopting totalitarian methods, or whether in accordance with our traditions and our Constitution we will have the confidence and the courage to be free."

If this nation attempts to preserve liberty by imitating our totalitarian rivals, then Justice Black will be remembered simply as one who vainly tried to keep the national faith. But if the country does indeed have the "confidence and the courage to be free," then Hugo Lafayette Black will have a high place among its most hallowed heroes.

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AN AMERICAN IN CUBA: PART II

THE REVOLUTION OF GOOD CHEER

ERWIN ROY JOHN

Here follows the concluding section of Dr. John's travels in Cuba, several months ago, with a jeep driver, interpreter and letter of introduction from the government in Havana. Dr. John, who had been attending a scientific conference in Havana before setting out on his trip into the Sierra Maestra, is research professor and director of the Brain Research Laboratories, New York Medical College.

After leaving San Lorenzo, we circled back through the mountains. We drove through occasional villages, some consisting of mud huts, others of cheerful modern cottages, which I was told had been built by the army for those *campesinos* who had the worst living conditions. About 10 P.M. we reached Holguin, a city of 240,000 people. We drove to the headquarters of the Communist Party, where we asked the clerk on duty to arrange an interview with the local party chairman and other officials. After scrutinizing my letter, he made a few phone calls and told us to return at 10 the next morning.

We looked up the local representative of ICAP (Cuban Institute for Friendship Between Peoples) who provided us with quarters in the ICAP house, a pleasant modern home which had belonged to a physician who had left for the United States the previous year. We went out to a drive-in for a sandwich. We had passed a number of these, built by the Ministry of the Interior, on our travels. They are modern, colorful cafeterias which serve fried fish, shrimps, ham sandwiches, fruit, ices and soda at reasonable prices. We ordered ham sandwiches (70c) and beer (40c) and joined a group of workers and *milicianos* watching a television speech by Castro.

The speech was at an event honoring a cane-cutting brigade of twenty men who had cut more than 25 million pounds of cane in one month. For almost an hour, Fidel (Cubans invariably refer to him thus, and the custom is contagious) listed the agricultural progress to date and future plans, to the accompaniment of desultory applause from the packed town square where he was speaking, and occasional approving grunts and nods from my neighbors. Having recited these signs of progress, and after pointing out that the lot of the Cuban people was markedly improving, he abruptly said that Cubans could not permit this prosperity to lull them into forgetting that while they were cutting cane, others were dying in the attempt to achieve their independence. He denounced American aggression against North Vietnam, stating that if Cuba were closer, it would offer help, but that such offers were not practical.

In contrast to the passive reactions to the earlier portion of his speech, each statement related to the Vietnamese conflict was greeted by roars of approval and thunderous applause. The group around me became quite animated as well, and I was convinced that these reactions were manifestations of genuine identification and sympathy with the Vietnamese, and agreement with Castro's position. On a number of occasions, I had noted clusters of Cubans attentively watching television broadcasts depicting civilians injured by U. S. bombings of North Vietnam. There was much head shaking and muttering.

Early the next morning, we met the secretary-general, the educational chairman, the organizational chairman and the propaganda chairman of the Holguin Regional United Party of the Socialist Revolution (PURS) for an interview that lasted several hours and ranged over a wide variety of topics. The picture of the party set forth by these men was not one of a mass organization with large membership. There are but 55,000 party members in Cuba at present; in the Holguin region, where more than 330,000 people live, there are only 1,200 members. Party members are selected on the basis of personal competence and dedication to revolutionary principles. The recruiting procedure has two features: first, selection of exemplary and respected workers by their colleagues at work; second, screening by party representatives. Party members explain government politics to their co-workers, and transmit reactions back to the national organization headquarters. The party neither runs the local production units nor makes national policy decisions; it acts throughout in an advisory and coordinating capacity.

I was surprised by the apparent lack of information the party representatives displayed at various points in our discussion. It may be that their apparent ignorance about currently controversial questions was assumed to avoid discussion, but I was reasonably well convinced that they were not feigning. I asked how they felt about the unilateral decision of the USSR to remove the missiles during the Cuban crisis, an action about which a number of Cubans had expressed strong resentment. They said that Fidel explained that he disagreed with the Soviet decision, but that they had reserved the right to withdraw the missiles if they so chose. They felt that they and the Cuban people were willing to fight against invasion to the death, with whatever weapons they had, missiles or no missiles. To illustrate how it was during the days of crisis, they told of going from

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house to house, late on the night when mobilization was called, looking for the members of the defense brigade of Holguin. Not a man was found at home; all had already gone to the assembly place. Throughout the discussion, they maintained that the party truly represents the feelings and desires of the people, because that is the only way in which a viable Cuban revolution can be built. Several times they reacted to a general political question by stating that it was not relevant to their concern, which was to formulate answers to the problems of Cuba. They gave the impression of people who were neither particularly thoughtful and well informed, nor extremely doctrinaire.

After leaving the committee, we walked several blocks to the Church of San José. The parish priest, Felipe de la Cruz, was a beaming, round little man in a white cassock, who greeted me warmly and drew me into his office. Over good coffee, he smoked strong cigarettes and answered my questions in a relaxed fashion. He said that his parishioners experience little difficulty because of their religion, and that not on an official level. At one time the police kept lists of those attending services, but this practice has been discontinued. There is no pressure upon Catholics not to come to church, but people do notice. However, this attention does not dissuade people from attending church. About 1,200 are usually present for Sunday services; there were more before the revolution, but the drop reflects the departure of numerous Catholics rather than fear among those who stayed. People left for economic reasons.

Father de la Cruz receives an adequate income from the parishioners. He regards the abolition of parochial schools and the confiscation of lands as a severe limitation on church activities. Religious instruction is provided in the church and at home, but such teaching is definitely more difficult now. In his judgment, the condition of some people has deteriorated, that of others has improved. For the poor people, there has been great improvement, particularly in education and health services. Although Catholics tend not to support the revolution strongly because Communists do not believe in God, he is personally glad that the revolution occurred.

We stopped housewives at random in the church square, asking questions about income and living conditions. Some reported an improvement in their conditions, others said things were much as before. No one thought things were worse or that she experienced deprivations. The women were obviously annoyed with rationing and with the need to stand in line for food quotas. I noticed a shoeshine boy with ragged pants and split shoes and asked him to sit in the shade and talk for a moment; he was the most neglected looking child I saw in Cuba. The boy proved to be the sole wage earner in a family of three. A married brother sends home 50 pesos a month, but his divorced father contributes nothing. The family lives in a five-room cottage, and there is enough money for food and an occasional dress for the baby sister. The boy smiled often, and spoke enthusiastically of the evening classes he attended after dinner. I tried to give him a peso. He refused it cheerfully, saying: "I did not shine your shoes, I only spoke with you!"

We drove from Holguin to Camaguey, occasionally digressing from the main road. We saw few housing units

under construction, but several schools and hospitals, some of them quite large. The roads were uniformly good. We passed fields of cane, coffee, oranges, tobacco, jute, plantain, papaya and coconut palms, and saw innumerable chickens, cows and pigs, but almost no agricultural machinery. The people we encountered were uniformly neat and pleasant, the children healthy and active. The majority of the rural homes were mud huts. Motor traffic was light. The remainder of our trip was much like what I have recounted, providing only the evidence that a 700-kilometer-long sample of Cuba showed fairly homogeneous living conditions. Throughout the trip, I encountered no evidence that freedom of movement was limited. The only incident worth recalling occurred in Camaguey airport, where I encountered a group of fifteen Chinese. After assiduous attempts, I found one who spoke poor Spanish and chatted briefly. The group were fishing-boat crews, returning to China after a year as instructors in the new Cuban fishing trawlers. They displayed a striking distaste for the Cubans, whom they dismissed as frivolous and ignorant—an attitude of condescension evidenced by their failure to acquire even a rudimentary command of the language.

I left Cuba with a number of strong impressions, which I should like to summarize. But let me qualify what I have to say in advance by emphasizing my awareness that I was in Cuba only a short time and that longer and more careful examination might modify my opinions.

I believe that the Cuban Revolution under Castro has accomplished important improvements in the general living conditions of the people, particularly with respect to public health and education. These gains have been accomplished by revolutionary actions, including confiscation of property, violence and imprisonment for members of the active opposition. These methods seem, however, to have been strongly supported by the majority of the people, as are the policies currently implemented by the government.

The visitor to Cuba does not receive the impression that it is an oppressed country, whose people suffer under a dictatorship of selfish men. Not only is there much gaiety but people from all walks of life say that life for them has

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changed for the better. A general air of friendliness and good cheer conveys a sense of participation and excitement among the people, and that attitude, I believe, cannot be coerced by political pressure. There is little evidence of caution or fear, and widespread willingness to discuss and criticize government policies in public and with strangers. There is little evidence of doctrinaire formulations, and people in positions of responsibility seem eager to solicit advice and opinions, and to learn from experience. The whole country appears to be a school in which people are trying to learn how to solve practical problems in a fashion compatible with their own sense of values. This is a revolutionary country, but it is a Cuban revolution.

I believe that Americans should have the chance to study this island at first hand, to examine this social revolution carefully and honestly, and to develop objective conclusions about it. In spite of the absence of parliamentary democracy, government policies seem responsive to the wishes and needs of the people, and receive widespread support. Evidence of corruption, or venality among members of the government, or of fear and dissatisfaction among the people, is not readily available.

Although we might prefer to have such changes achieved by parliamentary means, the fact is that the changes in Cuba were brought about by an abrupt and violent social revolution. Whether inspired by the Cuban example or driven by the pressure of intolerable conditions, it is inevitable that comparable revolutionary attempts will be launched by other peoples of underdeveloped countries, who weary of waiting for democratic reforms. The United States has already served notice of its implacable hostility to such movements, citing its determination to prevent the emergence of "another Cuba" as justification for intervention in the Dominican uprising. But to oppose revolutions in such places is to support existing wrongs—in a situation that offers no hope for real social change—in preference to the pain and upheaval of violent revolution, from which social transformation may occur. That choice is not legitimately ours to make; it belongs to those who must suffer the price of the decision.

The questions which Cuba raises will be raised again and again in the years to come. Are we to maintain our hostility and opposition to all future revolutionary movements? My own conclusions, based on what I have seen and tempered by the desire to learn more, is that the Cuban Revolution merits our support and approval.

BRONZE STARS OF PEACE

THE LEGIONNAIRE SAYS NO

DANIEL FORD

Mr. Ford's background includes a hitch at the Special Warfare Center and a two-month assignment in Vietnam in 1964 for this magazine [see July 13, July 27, August 24]. His novel, Now Comes Theodora, *was published last year by Doubleday.*

Item: All legionnaires are 100 per cent Americans.

Item: All pacifists are unwashed radicals.

The awful thing that Robert Hollis did, the absolutely inexcusable thing, was to make a whole lot of people think twice. Thinking once is hard enough, and most people never try. But twice! No wonder they pushed Robert Hollis around, damned him, savaged his uniform, and ultimately fired him as commander of his American Legion post in Jewett City, Conn.

Thousands of legionnaires across the country turned out to observe Veterans' Day, November 11, 1965. So did thousands of pacifists, protesting the war in Vietnam. But the cameras and the anger focused upon Robert Hollis, who was both a legionnaire and a pacifist. There he stood — a little guy in a baggy blue uniform with gold trimming, holding a sign which read: WITHDRAW U.S. TROOPS FROM VIETNAM NOW!

No wonder he got it in the neck.

Robert Hollis is not anybody's picture of a hero. He does some mildly heroic things — he served on the line in Korea, he took that pushing around last November without even raising his voice—but he does these things, I am quite sure, in a state of very personal terror. It is the terror that makes me love him. He is the archetypal Little Guy, the one who does what he must, and who is more surprised than anybody else when he succeeds in shaking an empire. He is a man of whom Ignazio Silone wrote:

> "If one man says, 'No,' the spell is broken and public order is endangered. The rebel voice must be stifled."
>
> "Even if the voice is that of a poor, solitary sick man?"
>
> "Even then."
>
> "Even if it belongs to a peaceful man who thinks in his own way, but does nothing evil apart from that?"
>
> "Even then."

That is Robert Hollis. Oh, he is sturdy enough, having done physical labor most of his life, but he is a bit less than average height, and rather pale. His features are indistinct except for a long, sharp nose. Blue eyes. Black hair, cut short and beginning to recede. His smile is warm, but it lights only one side of his face. His posture is apologetic. Altogether, he is the sort of man who insists he has already eaten, if he should happen to visit you at dinner time—but a man who thinks in his own way.

They made fun of Hollis at school, I suspect, and elected him to some minor class office. That was in Marlboro, Mass. He finished high school in 1947, worked for a year in a local shoe factory, then decided to become a Congregational minister. He survived two years of a seven-year course at the theological seminary in Bangor, Me. Then he dropped out and returned to Marlboro, where he found a job as a lathe operator. He was classified 1-A-O (willing to serve but not to bear arms) and was inducted into the U.S. Army on May 13, 1952.

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I have a strong image of Pvt. Robert Hollis, standing in the liquid sunshine of a New England spring. His shoulders are slightly hunched. His overseas cap is planted square on his head in the manner prescribed by induction-camp posters, which is the worst possible way to wear an overseas cap if you want to show a little dash. His uniform is too large for him, or too small. No matter how often Pvt. Hollis returns to the supply room, no matter if he visits the post tailor—his uniform will never fit.

Like most conscientious objectors, he became a medic; like most of them also, in that year of stalemated war, he was shipped to Korea as soon as his training was complete. He was assigned to the Third Infantry Division in the Kum Wa Valley. "You're just like the ordnance people," he was told. "Your job is to repair pieces of fighting machinery and put them back on the line." He did so, as a psychiatric aide and as driver for the chaplain. He even served on the line himself, standing guard without a rifle, until the arms-bearing men in his outfit complained that they couldn't sleep nights, with only those pacifists between them and the Chinese bayonets. He earned the usual decorations, including the Korean Campaign ribbon with two bronze stars.

With his ribbons and his separation papers, Robert Hollis came home to Marlboro in 1954. He joined the American Legion. He worked in a department store, then in a steel fabricating plant, where he was a busy if minor union official. He married, and helped rear a foster son who later served with the U.S. Marines in Vietnam. But none of these things quite satisfied him. He still had this great big *no!* bottled up inside.

"I was like the man who drove the getaway car," he says now of his military service. "I didn't rob the bank, but I was just as guilty as the men who did."

So he began to take an interest in the Committee for Nonviolent Action. CNVA is a loose federation of pacifists who are most often seen demonstrating in front of military installations, sometimes marching great distances to dramatize their opposition to war, occasionally engaging in civil disobedience in the tradition of Gandhi and Thoreau. There is a national headquarters at 5 Beekman Street in New York City, and branches here and there around the country. In 1963, Robert Hollis joined the staff of New England CNVA in Voluntown, Conn.

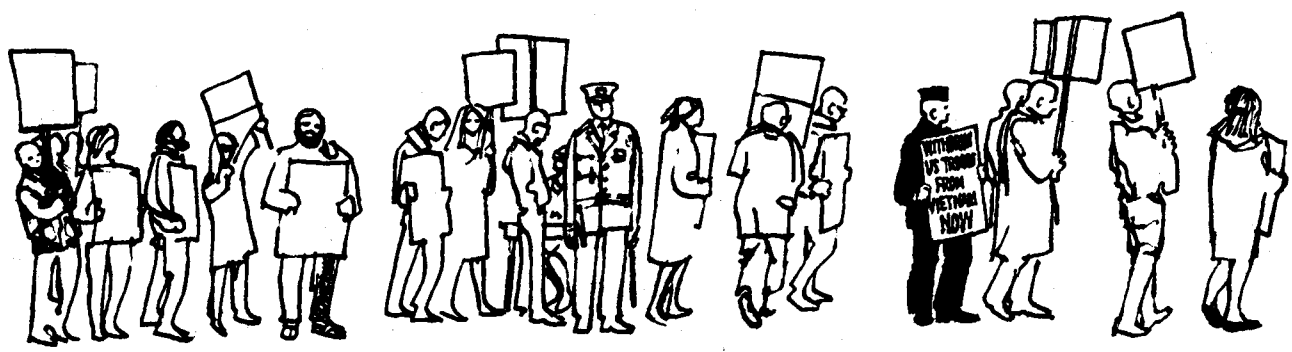
New England CNVA consists of a fine old farmhouse, some ramshackle outbuildings, a trailer or two, and about twelve full-time pacifists. Several of the staff members are generally absent, however, rebuilding churches in the South or serving out jail sentences for draft refusal. The others work on a variety of peace projects, for which they receive room and board and $1 a week. To join them, Robert Hollis left his family, sold the liquor store he had recently established in Rowe, Mass., and resigned his post as Rowe town moderator.

This man, you see, has absolutely no instinct for hypocrisy. If war is evil (and who denies it?), then Robert Hollis must work full time for peace, however ruinous the personal consequences. Similarly, he retained his membership in the American Legion. There may not be many legionnaires who take seriously the Legion injunction to "promote peace and good will on earth," but Robert Hollis is one of them. He would see nothing paradoxical in being both a pacifist and a legionnaire.

On Armed Forces Day in 1964, he was standing in the picket line at Boston Naval Shipyard. His uniform and battle ribbons caused some surprise, but no particular outrage. A month or so later he was back in Connecticut, protesting a Polaris submarine launching at Electric Boat Division in Groton. This time he nearly created a riot. The Groton police whisked him out of town, and he decided to wear civilian clothes at future launchings. But he put on the Legion uniform in September, while demonstrating at a Bomarc missile site north of Montreal, and again in November, when he was part of a CNVA "caravan" which toured New England colleges, debating the draft with anyone who would listen. None of these appearances received much publicity.

Then, in February of this year, Robert Hollis transferred his Legion membership to Jewett City—no city at all, but a small community just across the Connecticut Turnpike from Voluntown. The Jewett City legionnaires now insist that they were tricked. Robert Hollis insists that he was completely honest about his antiwar beliefs. The truth is probably somewhere between: he is a diffident man, not likely to push pacifism very hard at a Legion bar. And most of the legionnaires probably did not hear such views as he did present, for the reason that most of them did not attend the monthly meetings.

In any event, here was Post 15 in Jewett City, Conn., infiltrated by a pacifist. So what did Post 15 do? It elected him commander. As seems to be customary in his life, Hollis was nominated for a lesser office. At least one member of the Legion knew about his CNVA connections, because somebody called the farm in Voluntown to ask if Robert Hollis was willing to run for post adjutant. He was. Through some confusion, another legionnaire was nominated for the same office; this little problem was resolved when the commander-nominee decided not to run, and suggested that Robert Hollis be named instead.



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Hollis seems to have been a good commander. He organized a benefit supper for the Legion bartender, who had been injured in an automobile accident. He obtained for Post 15 a flag which had flown above the nation's capitol. And when some of the post's folding chairs needed repair, he repaired them, gratis, at the metal-working shop he had established in Jewett City. (This shop was meant to provide jobs for disillusioned defense workers, but it has not been particularly successful.) Robert Hollis also obeyed the Legion request to "show the colors and wear your uniform on Veterans' Day," which proved to be his undoing as commander of Post 15.

For Veterans' Day, New England CNVA assembled at Fort Devens in Ayer, Mass. Devens was a major induction center during the Korean War—Robert Hollis was one of the thousands processed there—but now it is a quiet post, given over to the training of Army security agency personnel. One hundred pacifists turned out for a silent vigil in front of the main gate on November 11. At least, the vigil was meant to be silent. But the television cameramen also turned out, and the counter-pickets, and several FBI agents, and 400 spectators. And Robert Hollis became the best-known American Legion commander in the United States.

Look at him!—the little guy in a uniform that doesn't quite fit, with gold piping on his cap, and ribbons on his chest. What do you make of him? It's easy enough to dispose of the other pacifists—the bearded young men; the girls with long, straight hair; the middle-aged do-gooders with constipated smiles. . . . You simply hold up an ardent if misspelled sign: YOU FARIES COULDN'T PASS THE PHYSICAL.

But what do you make of a man who so patently *did* pass the physical, and who has the campaign ribbons to prove it? You can do one of two things. You can rethink all your easy notions about pacifists and patriots, or you can obliterate him. No doubt some of the spectators at Fort Devens managed to do the necessary rethinking, but the others made a pretty good start toward obliterating Robert Hollis. They called him coward, punched him in the stomach, knocked him down, and tore the ribbons from his uniform. The television cameras caught the last of it, including the final "goddamn."

Next evening, in Jewett City's green-shingled Legion hall, the television set above the bar broadcast the news of Post 15's disgrace. The legionnaires immediately set out to rid themselves of their commander. A first attempt turned out to be unconstitutional—it seemed that only Robert Hollis knew anything about impeachment—and the proceedings were put off until November 22. Meanwhile, Commander Hollis kept right on demonstrating. He was part of the CNVA picket line at Danbury, Conn., when a young draft refuser was released from the federal prison there; he was in the picket line again when the Polaris submarine *Henry L. Stimson* went down the ways at Groton. He also took part in a CNVA training program, although not very actively. He has a tendency to fall asleep during lectures.

The November 22 meeting must have been the best attended in Post 15's history. One hundred legionnaires crowded into a room that held chairs for thirty-six; two sergeants-at-arms kept the newsmen at bay; outside, cheerfully chivvied by state policemen, 400 or 500 townspeople

gathered to pay their respects to the notorious commander.

"Well," said Robert Hollis, with a disarming smile on the right side of his face, "they've been asking me how we could get out the members, and here they are." He wore his complete Legion regalia to the meeting, and was the only man who did so. The other legionnaires, in red plaid jackets and woolen shirts, were not very cordial, but then they had no reason to be. Many of them had never seen him before.

Post 15 required exactly twelve minutes to suspend its commander and authorize a committee to see what else could be done with him. The newsmen took an hour. Robert Hollis fielded their questions well, as befitted a minister *manqué*, but the knuckles were white upon his clasped hands. Then he left the building, as solitary as when he had entered it. The crowd greeted him with hearty but somehow good-natured jeers, and a state police car escorted him out of town.

"He did it for the publicity," judged one legionnaire.

"He's going to be the richest man in the country," said another. *"That's* why he did it."

Not really. Robert Hollis is now planning to visit South Vietnam, not by the expensive air route across the Pacific, but by way of Europe. He will fly to Copenhagen on a cut-rate air line, then take a train to Moscow, where he has a twenty-four-hour visa, then . . . how in the world does a man travel from Moscow to Saigon? Via Cambodia, perhaps. At any rate, Robert Hollis has received one $5 contribution toward his traveling expenses, and will cover the rest by selling his station wagon.

So there he goes, the quintessential Little Guy, heading back to war by the most unlikely route imaginable. He is not very sure how he will reach Saigon, and is even more uncertain what he will do after he arrives. But I do not think that we have heard the last of him.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

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DAVID SARNOFF. *By Eugene Lyons. Harper & Row. 372 pp. $6.95.*

CARL DREHER

Near the beginning of this biography of his kinsman, Lyons writes: "I have diligently searched for 'shadows' that would make Sarnoff more human and credible. I found a good many, of course, and will try to weave them into the narrative. . . ." He does not succeed, and one can sympathize with him, up to a point. He was writing about one of the most imperious personalities of the century, with sixty years of industrial success and puffery behind him. Given Lyons' own predilections, the result could only be a Sarnoff-dominated biography, further slanted in some parts by Lyons' dependence on Sarnoff, or Sarnoff admirers, for accounts of events long past.

Thus Lyons takes on faith, and even amplifies, the incomprehensible epic of Sarnoff's feats in the *Titanic* disaster. Aged 21, Sarnoff was the wireless operator at the Wanamaker department store station in New York, which handled traffic with the corresponding station in Philadelphia. On the evening of April 14, 1912, he picked up the news that the *Titanic* had struck an iceberg on her maiden voyage to New York. Here is Lyons' description of what followed:

> The operator at Wanamaker's signaled receipt of the message and asked the *Olympic* for details. He notified the press. Soon extras were being cried in the streets and the eyes of the whole world, it seemed, along with its fears and hopes, were fixed on young Sarnoff and his earphones. Reporters, then crowds of friends and relatives of those on board the liner, along with the curious, converged on the department store. Police had to be summoned to control them and give the operator the privacy and quiet that he needed.
>
> Other coastal stations and vessels in the disaster area tried to help, which merely jammed the airwaves. This was to be a one-man job. President Taft ordered all other stations to close down so that the one at Wanamaker's might more easily maintain communications.
>
> For three days and three nights, without sleep and virtually without food, Sarnoff remained glued to his earphones, while a horrified world hung on his every word. . . .

Sarnoff did sit there for seventy-two hours, and I am sure he was motivated as much by a desire to bring relief to the friends and relatives of the *Titanic* survivors as by the perfectly natural desire of an aspiring young man to get into the act. Just the same, he was a supernumerary in this drama. The Canadian Marconi station at Cape Race, N.F., was in charge. Cape Race was in the zone of operations, as Wanamaker's was not; Wanamaker's was not even a ship-to-shore station. Sarnoff was already one of the best operators in the business, and much too informed to try to take into his own hands —assuming that he could—a situation so critical.

His role in the reception of the names of the survivors is equally ambiguous. The first transmission was from the *Carpathia* to the *Olympic,* thence to Cape Race, thence to New York. It included mainly names of first- and second-class passengers. Thereafter the *Carpathia,* as she returned to New York with the survivors, was largely out of communication. She was the center of a disgraceful Donnybrook that involved the American Marconi Company's fight with the U.S. Navy, the orders of Capt. Arthur H. Rostron of the *Carpathia* to reserve the wireless for official business and personal messages of passengers, Rostron's aversion to newsmen, and the alleged interference of amateurs. The *Carpathia's* operators would not even acknowledge a message from President Taft, who had sent the scout cruisers *Chester* and *Salem* to meet her, asking for information about his military aide, Maj. Archibald W. Butt. (He went down with the ship.) The contention and confusion were such that the New York manager of the Cunard line sent five radiograms to Rostron "commanding" him to send "at once" a complete list of the *Titanic* passengers he had picked up, and never got an answer.

If Sarnoff was singularly able to cope with this babel, he would still have been better off with a relief operator, even one not quite so expert. As every veteran of the early days of wireless telegraphy knows, protracted copying through spark interference was one of the most grueling experiences a man could go through, and worse when the material consisted of names or cable code rather than plain language. Even the strongest operator would reach the point where he could take no more.

As the situation worsened, the Marconi Company appealed to the Secretary of the Navy to shut down all Navy stations north of Norfolk. This was done, but not for Sarnoff. Amid the welter of contradictory reports, all seem to agree with *The New York Times* account (April 18, 1912) on the terms of the understanding between the Navy and Marconi—that the latter would order its marine stations to handle only traffic to and from the *Carpathia.* The stations were listed: South Wellfleet on Cape Cod, Siasconset on Nantucket Island, Sagaponack on eastern Long Island, and Sea Gate at the entrance to New York Harbor. Wanamaker's was not mentioned.

As the *Carpathia* approached New York, Sarnoff abandoned his vigil, got a rubdown at a Turkish bath, and taxied to Sea Gate. There he was no doubt useful, but Lyons' assertion that it was a "one-man job," that Sarnoff single-handedly salvaged a disorderly and anarchic situation, is ridiculous on the face of it. He did his best—for the living and the dead, for Wanamaker's and for himself, but it was a mess to the end. And it already shows the acute sense of the value of publicity which has stayed with Sarnoff to the present day.

I do not want to leave the impression that such gullibility pervades the entire book. Some parts are essentially true; others, though biased, can still be useful to the serious student of U.S. industrial history. As literature it is down in the cellar. It could not be a revealing biography because Lyons and Sarnoff are too closely identified, not so much because of the family relationship as because Lyons is an uncritical defender not only of Sarnoff's actual achievements but of the corollary shibboleths, evasions and pretensions. He tries not to be sycophantic, but it comes out as if one of Sarnoff's platoon of P.A. men had been assigned to the job. A bolder biographer would have served Sarnoff better; he is a brilliant fellow, actually. Lyons' contrapuntal mingling of admiration and apologetics does scant justice to a subject so picturesque and richly endowed with intelligence, vitality and *chutzpah.*

Sarnoff is an important and fascinating personage from at least three viewpoints: as an industrialist, a would-be political and moral authority, and a human being. For the last I have no space. His great success, of course, is in the first, which covers sixty years of wireless telegraphy, wireless telephony, audio and video broadcasting, and the whole vast spectrum of electronics. Radio broadcasting would have

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come without Sarnoff, and so would television, but I think it is fair to say that several managerial prodigies would have been required to substitute for this one, and so with all his other achievements.

As Sarnoff's first book-length biographer, Lyons is under the necessity of covering much familiar ground, but he supplies details and linkages that have not appeared in print before. In 1900, David, the oldest son of a desperately impoverished family, arrived in the U.S. from Uzlian in Minsk. His father, a house painter in poor health, had come four years earlier. David was not yet 10 when he said to himself, "If I don't help my family, who will?" and began hawking Yiddish newspapers. At 15, with his father dying, David was already the principal support of his parents and three brothers and a sister. Going to school and working as a newsboy, he studied Morse code and applied to George De Sousa, the traffic manager of the Marconi Company, for a job as a telegrapher. De Sousa hired him as the company's office boy, but soon Sarnoff was an operator and some twelve years later De Sousa was working for him and proud that he had hired him.

In 1919, the Radio Corporation of America succeeded to the assets and liabilities of the Marconi Company. Sarnoff was then 29, and in a few weeks he was in fact running the company through its middle-aged president. Sarnoff predicted radio broadcasting in detail as early as 1915, and after 1921, this became the chief business of RCA, giving way in part later to the protean forms of electronics. Ten years after the founding of RCA, Sarnoff succeeded to the presidency and not only pulled the company through the great depression but liberated it from its founders, General Electric and Westinghouse. Later, he became chairman of the board of RCA and of its profitable subsidiary, N.B.C., and of other ancillary companies; rarely has a multiplex chairman so dominated his directors. Although he has recently relinquished the duties of chief executive and passed the presidency on to his son Robert, he remains chairman under a new five-year contract and no one in the radio setup would think of challenging his authority.

Industrially, technologically, financially, he is a gigantic figure. The vision which businessmen are always talking about he has. His superiors in the Marconi Company, intent on competing for intercontinental and ship-to-shore telegraph traffic, brushed off his "Radio Music Box" and found themselves anticipated by Westinghouse six years later. The radio networks, in the money with sound alone, resisted television; Sarnoff forced it on them and they made more money than before. Then he would not let them rest with black and white.

Sarnoff's philosophy is that of the technological pioneer and obsolescence maker celebrated by Joseph Schumpeter, Austrian minister of finance in the near-starvation period following World War I, and subsequently professor of economics at Harvard. Sarnoff might well have served as the prototype of Schumpeter's technologically prophetic entrepreneur, the dynamic factor in capitalism capable of preserving the system, at least for a time. To pioneer is to risk, the reward of risk (when it succeeds) is profit, profit goes largely into further innovation. To a great extent this cycle is Sarnoff's contribution to 20th-century industrial development. It calls for heavy corporate expenditures for research, engineering, market development, and unprofitable operation and manufacture until the corner is turned. Equally essential is *sang-froid*, with which Sarnoff is well endowed. He sank $50 million in hard cash in black-and-white TV before getting out of the red, $130 million in color, $100 million in electric data processing, and so on. Last fall he tossed $50 million into additional color-tube manufacturing facilities alone.

All this—except the last—he did in the face of warnings of impending disaster. He always defied them. Many experienced people in the industry felt that his insistence on color would at last prove his nemesis. But once again he knew best and

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came out on top. On the way he defeated the C.B.S. color system based on a revolving disk driven by a motor which, had not its initial approval by the FCC been reversed, would have set the industry back ten years.

For all of this Sarnoff, and only Sarnoff, is responsible. He is also responsible for the "wasteland"—although in the twenties he tried to avert the dependence of broadcasting on advertising. Nevertheless, wretched though TV may be in the bulk of its entertainment, and outrageous in its advertising, it is the most powerful medium of communication devised by man. Its political leverage is immense, as the recent hearings of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Vietnam once again demonstrated. In assessing Sarnoff's role, one must bear in mind that he deserves practically sole credit for the development of the medium *per se*, while he is no more responsible than other leaders of the industry for the shabby uses to which it has been put, and part of the blame rests on the great mass of viewers who tolerate and pay for such trash.

When he discourses on questions of morals and politics it is difficult for Sarnoff to sound downright stupid in the fashion of lesser industrialists, but sometimes he seems to be trying. Lyons, of course, dutifully presents Sarnoff as Sarnoff wishes to be presented—eminent in the one area as in the other, which also conforms conveniently with Lyons' own outlook and professional connections. But any bright high school sophomore can discern the difference between Sarnoff's intellectual stature as an industrialist (and let no one imagine that intellect, albeit of a specialized, instrumental kind, is not involved in the building of a General Motors or an RCA) and his pronouncements on society.

Lyons pictures Sarnoff as one of the aboriginal Russophobes and Red hunters. "It is significant," he writes, "in view of his later emphasis on the Communist menace, that even in the 1930s Sarnoff, as a matter of course, bracketed Red Russia with Brown Germany in denouncing totalitarianism. That scarcely enhanced his popularity among those intellectuals who were then as ardently pro-Soviet as anti-Nazi." If there are any intellectuals for whom I may presume to speak, it enhances our contempt. The identification of communism with fascism is a scurvy political trick when it is employed by people who know better, and those who honestly believe the two are the same are worse dupes than the intellectuals Lyons refers to. Sarnoff, I think, belongs in neither of these categories, although at times he may keep company with one or the other.

In the thirties he was perfectly capable of distinguishing between communism and fascism. If later he could see no difference, it must have been because on him, as on many other big businessmen, the cold war had exercised its seduction. The commercial delights of cold war are one reason the concept of "Red fascism," originated by one of William Randolph Hearst's *littérateurs*, was so easily sold to the American public after World War II. Fascism had been defeated by an alliance of the capitalist democracies and the Soviet Union. In its cold form, the war was then redirected against the former ally, thus achieving two vital objectives. Capitalist democracy was protected against an external enemy, and thereafter corporate capitalism could rely on massive government spending on armaments to banish depression by a version of Keynesianism that Lord Keynes never envisaged. Of course none of this is even hinted at in the Lyons version.

At first blush it is astonishing that a mind as astute as Sarnoff's should treat such grave questions at the grade-school level and appear capable only of choosing between primitive alternatives, without bothering to look for others. No more glaring contrast can be imagined than that between the functioning of Sarnoff's mind in this sphere and the constructive and resourceful thinking of, say, a George Kennan. Except one: even more striking, since it takes place in the same brain, is the chasm between the way Sarnoff thinks of the problems of RCA and the problems of U.S.A. This assumes that his public speeches reflect his actual thinking; whether they do or not I have no present means of knowing.

In general, however, it is as important for the industrialist on the make *not* to think freely about politics as it is for him to think freely about industry. Then, once the habit is ingrained, it persists, except in rare individuals like Theodore K. Quinn, who was slated for the presidency of General Electric until he rebelled against the whole corporate system. On this principle, Sarnoff early found it expedient to throttle down his mind in directions which might lead it to dangerous dissent, in order to give it full scope in the direction dictated by his early experiences and the ruling passion of his maturity—the direction of industrial creativity and power within the *status quo*. He could afford to be a radical in only one field, that of electronics, and to that he gravitated with a sure instinct, allying himself with the great radio inventor Edwin Howard Armstrong, and forcing his technological radicalism on backward superiors until he reached the top himself. In politics he took his views ready-made from the upper-class business community and its associated politicians—what is loosely called the Establishment, of which he thus became one of the pillars.

Still I am not satisfied that this is the end—that further development of the infinitely expansible Sarnoff ego is precluded. From Minsk a man cannot rise to the Presidency of the United States, nor would Sarnoff's elitism and lack of the glad hand comport with success in electoral politics. But when we were young, I fully expected to see him in some such office

THE INFORMATION

Barrage. Bit after bit.
Mostly of slight immediate,
Even foreseeable, con-
Sequence or interest.
Data. Which is a way
Of disposing of it by
Collecting it, a war-
Rant that we will somehow make
Some future use of it.

Retained so, the pieces
Become subtly inter-
Twined; and since not
Releasable all at once,
Are substituted. Let
Someone intrude some notion
That smacks of isolation:
See what he gets. Anything
Goes. Most of it is clever.

Because we have such in-
Formation, so many
Juxtapositions. His
Beautiful statement caused
Him pain, or he wouldn't
Have spoken; as for us,
It keeps our surplus data
Repressed —— till, after a time,
It is assimilated.

The talk is brave. Maybe,
With all our facts, we can't
Know what is of value and
What not. The right and wrong:
Only ingested through
Some resistance, some
Form of themselves. Is
The antitoxin the toxin?
Meanwhile, our unused in-

Formation branches in mind,
Body, crowding, devouring
All objectivity. We
Say (or think) what we say true ——
While saying it. We talk
Less? Still, the barrage continues.
Corrupt analogy seems
The best way to not
Distort what we may mean.

DAVID GALLER

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as Secretary of State. That was still my expectation after World War II, and not implausibly. By then he had a military title, his relations with successive Presidents had always been close, and he was recognized as one of the most formidable negotiators that ever played for high stakes.

And not only in industry. When J. P. Morgan and Owen D. Young had reached a stalemate in the negotiations for revision of German reparations after World War I, Sarnoff, who had been brought along by Young as an assistant on call, sat down with Hjalmar Schacht and devised what became the Young Plan. Young himself implied that it might more aptly have been called the Sarnoff Plan.

Of course for many years Sarnoff has not written his own speeches, but one he delivered last September, at the Conference on World Peace Through Law, bore the stamp of his forward thinking at its best. It was in a vein utterly different from the *Reader's Digest*-Eugene Lyons type of anti-Communist crusading. Sarnoff asked:

> When, for example, a Russian satellite can broadcast directly to a Kansas farm, or an American satellite can broadcast directly to a Hungarian collective, what will be the reaction in both countries? . . . What rules of conduct are to apply, and who is to establish them? This question evades the jurisdiction of any established body, yet it will affect the welfare of all nations and all people. . . . It would be a travesty on the hopes of humanity if this immense force for enlightenment, understanding and social advancement were to be subverted to narrow national ends, or become discredited by the failure of nations to agree upon its beneficial uses.

Subverted? Narrow national ends? The terms were used in a new context, at variance with what had gone before, when Sarnoff saw eye to eye with John Foster Dulles and advised President Eisenhower on schemes for psychological warfare against the Soviet bloc. *The Nation* commented editorially (October 11, 1965):

> For the moment, at least, world peace has supplanted the cold war in Sarnoff's thinking. The outlook for the survival of mankind would be more hopeful if peace could become for him a lasting preoccupation, and if other powerful industrialists and politicians were to follow his lead.

Why not? His influence is great, and he could make a start, at least on the world's most complex and most crucial problem. And he is only 75, after all.

The Irrelevance of Dick and Jane

THE SCHOOLCHILDREN: Growing Up in the Slums. *By Mary Frances Greene and Orletta Ryan. Pantheon Books. 227 pp. $4.95.*

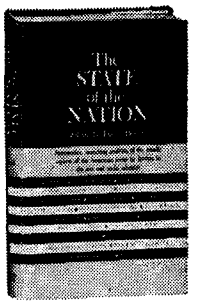
PETER SCHRAG

Mr. Schrag is assistant secretary of Amherst College and the author of Voices in the Classroom *(Beacon).*

In our innocent past, when all the categories were moral rather than sociological, a child who didn't learn in school was either stupid or lazy or, perhaps, just plain ornery. Nobody suggested that problems in the slum classroom were only reflections of the home, the family or the community. Now, being modern, we have learned all about cultural deprivation and disadvantaged youth, about the bias of intelligence tests and teachers, and about the irrelevance of *Dick and Jane* in a world of broken homes, narcotics, unemployment and violence.

But just when we had all the *new* categories straight, when cultural enrichment had become the slum-school substitute for the paddle and the gold star, and when a bureaucratic referral to "guidance" supplanted the sadism of the schoolmaster and truant officer, along came people like the psychologist Kenneth B. Clark to remind us that the new concepts sometimes generate as much brutality and discrimination as the old. It is Clark's sense, for example, that in a ghetto school "cultural deprivation" is often nothing more than an acceptable and apparently scientific euphemism for the dogma of Negro inferiority. Clark and those who share his views have, in effect, removed the security of all those new classifications and have suggested that part of the trouble with education in the ghetto is rooted in a superabundance of concepts, in a shortage of love and understanding and, most of all, in a failure to believe that Negro and Puerto Rican children can be educated. If Clark's notion—expressed in *Dark Ghetto* and in his massive 1964 report on New York's HARYOU Project—needed any additional reinforcement, Mary Frances Greene and Orletta Ryan have now supplied it in *The Schoolchildren: Growing Up in the Slums.*

The Schoolchildren is a series of classroom sketches from two Harlem elementary schools, most of them presented directly as verbatim, firsthand dialogue, and without preaching or generalizations. Operating with a kind of clinical precision, the two authors, both Harlem teachers, have magnificently transcribed and re-



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ported the language and behavior of children, teachers and parents. In many respects the book reads like a report from a command post, lean, unpretentious and unsentimental. It has no beginning or end, starts with no premises and reaches no conclusions. But it is real. It speaks. It moves. The two schools it represents could be in Southside Chicago or in Roxbury, or in any other slum.

Here are children who spell street words better than "house" or "dog," 9- and 12-year-olds suspended between commonplace fantasies and unbelievable reality, living on the brink of every sort of social and personal disaster. In a particular classroom, "many are disturbed, seven severely. Fifteen or more have asthmatic attacks. Ten thumbsuckers. Any diversion, as little as change of subject—everybody in back stands up and starts talking." Here are the bureaucrats from downtown, the self-serving teachers bucking for a promotion to assistant principal, the form fillers, the frightened and the defeated. Here are adults colluding with wily children for trifles: peace in the classroom ("I was quiet but he never did give me my quatuh. He was a *liah* . . ."), protection from the authorities, or simply immunity from another official snoop. Here also are the small heroes and the minor triumphs: Donald, the sissified son of an alcoholic mother, who learns to fight back; Leanore who discovers, much to her surprise, that her teacher does care enough to walk all the way to her house to speak to her mother about her bad behavior, that not all teachers are fakes; Miss Bowser, the tough Negro schoolmarm who believes in the potential of the kids, and who demands that they try to live up to it.

The schools that the book portrays are too complex for simple labels; they are, literally, part of a system with mutually harmonious and reinforcing parts: a community of defeat and depression, frightened teachers, inadequate supplies and facilities, and an administrative structure designed to fulfill the purposes of accountants and lawyers, not those of education. Some classes are taught regularly by substitutes, thus duplicating rather than countering the instability of homes where aunts and grandmothers appear seriatim to take on the care of younger children; at the end of each day the teachers charge for the exits, some to moonlight jobs, others to the safety of a better neighborhood, and at the end of each term several always announce that they've had it, and off they go to the suburbs. To function at all, such a system requires subterfuge: the promotion of illiterate children, the pretense that the sick are well, that the rebellious are docile and that massive stagnation is progress:

> "Miss Abernathy, there's not a child in this room who can read fifteen words. Few of them work; they can't read."
>
> "They've been *well* taught, Miss Burke. All our teachers are doing their best."

As everywhere else, the children have learned to play the game, have probed the places of weakness and strength, the instances where tolerance is merely the face of apathy, and the situations where a good bluff almost always wins: "I'm not going anywhere with you. Fifty times you've said 'I'll visit your mother,' but I'm on to you." In a fashion, the school itself becomes a training ground for the streets, a place where the official rhetoric and culture, badly represented, tangle unevenly with common slum experience:

> Knocks Reggie's book from the desk, Reggie dives after it and punches Harold; the spotlight goes on Reggie and Harold; Curtis appears to be reading a book. . . . But what he is really doing is getting money from Reggie's inkwell. Reggie and Harold get punished. Leanore: "You keep thinking it's Reggie. It's Curtis. I could run this class better than you."

There is no end of evidence about the unevenness of the battle. Puerto Rican children who can barely read, who are pathetically naive about the approved middle-class world, and who rarely speak a complete sentence know "fifteen rock'n' roll songs in Spanish with many verses, a dozen TV commercials word-perfect in English; can dance twenty versions of the Twist and Frug, can swim half a mile." Others come to class barely able to keep awake after a night with three in a room, a fight, a squawking television set, perhaps a drunken father, or an addict mother. Still others, children of junior high school age, regularly invade the elementary school, roam the halls in packs, intimidate teachers and brawl in the johns. ("It is rather sad," the authors say. "School is the only world they have ever known outside their homes. They fear the unknown. They are looking for something to come back to.")

The children are learning the techniques of slum survival—the way one deals with rats and the welfare system, how to fend off addicts and play the numbers—but they remain pathetically naive about the rest of the world, about what someone in *The Schoolchildren* calls "the wonderful workers," about jobs and geography, about history and music and theatre. ("George Washington comes in a little closer; he knows his father gonna whup him, but he say, 'Excuse me sir, I done it. I cannot tell no lie. I am like Martin Luther King.' ") They know more about sex and violence, about self-preservation, about disease and death, than many middle-class children may ever know. But those are not the things the schools value, and so the children are written off as "deprived" or as "non-readers."

And yet *The Schoolchildren* is no *Blackboard Jungle*. It is not a collection of atrocities and not a recipe for salvation. Its lack of structure is sometimes frustrating, but it also generates persuasive power, like a log from a ship whose fate we suspect but never learned. Because the book is unsentimental, there are no official heroes; but there are believers, people who give substance and coherence to the separate sketches and who, in a sense, give the book its argument, such as the teacher of the boy, Curtis, a chronic classroom trouble source:

> I'm paid eleven dollars a night to teach you to read, and you know what, baby? *I'm going to do it.* You're lazy. You thought it was going to be puppets and games; then you found out it was work; you couldn't take it. But you're going to do it.

Later to another teacher:

> He has to know someone will follow him up; we can't have these phantom figures floating through the school system. . . . Too many teachers have come here trying to save his soul; no one's given him the crack that might save him. . . . He has to be kept *in a class*. It's too late, but next year he won't even have you or me. He'll have—but we don't know, do we?

A teacher like this is worth a hundred trips to the museum not because she's tough (although almost all the ghetto teachers who enjoy respect are tough, not all tough teachers are respected) but because she acts on a belief that a nasty colored brat from Harlem who is about to call her a dirty name—can learn to read.

If the book supports any single idea, it is that all programs and doctrines oversimplify, but that those which don't generate real concern for children in the classroom are worthless. What appears of cultural enrichment looks like another administrative morass, and what there is of other special services—remedial reading programs, for example—depends primarily on the personnel hired to perform them. "A few blocks from here there is a good school," says one of the teachers in *The Schoolchildren:*

> It's eighty years old, with multiple wings and stairs like ours; there are hundreds of places for children to hide—and they never do. Every child is in his room all day. Low truancy, zero lateness. Notes go home with

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aides at nine-thirty if a child isn't there. The school reads on grade level. The principal is a Negro woman, but that's not the point. She has the same cross section of teachers as anywhere else. They come from the same school board, same distribution of assignments. But this level is what she demands. . . .

After all the arguments about slums and deprivation, about buses and "the neighborhood concept," *The Schoolchildren* comes back to an old-fashioned notion: that if you insist the kid learn something, he will learn, and that the most severe shortage in education is one of people who believe that idea and have the courage and skill to act on it. Integration, given those standards, may finally prove to be nothing more—or less—than a way of recapturing those parents and teachers who have always demanded good schools. At the same time, *The Schoolchildren* also makes it clear that any significant change involves *all* aspects of slum culture: jobs, housing, teachers, books, parents and, most of all, general public attitudes. There is an internal perfection about poverty and deprivation which tends to regenerate its separate evils and to defeat scattered efforts. Any real hope of change requires reforms across the board, and not merely in the schools.

Giving Them What They Want

TELEVISION AND SOCIETY: An Inquest and Agenda for Improvement. *By Harry J. Skornia. McGraw-Hill Book Co. 268 pp. $7.50. Paper $2.45.*

CHRISTOPHER KOCH

Mr. Koch spent several years as program director at KPFA in Berkeley and WBAI in New York.

In a speech to a group of radio and television news directors in 1958, Edward R. Murrow commented that "to a very considerable extent the media of mass communications in a given country reflects the political, economic and social climate in which it flourishes." Then, after pointing out that television in the United States is now largely used "to distract, delude, amuse and insulate us" from what he called the "demanding realities which must be faced if we are to survive," he facilely concluded that we should convince big business and television executives to reform "the industry." Little of the vast American literature on mass communications tells us much more.

Our professional sociologists deal largely in the quantitative, and devote themselves to what can be neatly described and measured. The worst of this tries to develop more scientific (read efficient) ways of convincing (read manipulating) mass public opinion. Some of it purports to prove that mass communications, while qualitatively inferior to high art and direct conversation, fortunately don't have any significant social impact. Too much of the sociology is larded with references to a wide choice of competing points of view and much good material on the mass media, thereby implying that only the public can be blamed for preferring *Kitsch* to culture, as David Sarnoff and industry spokesmen have said for years.

The more interesting sociological work in mass communications deals with the effects of certain kinds of content on audiences, such as sex and violence on children. The nonprofessionals are also generally more interested in content analysis and are, therefore, also more interesting to read. Such essays on the appalling content of most of what goes over television and radio frequently end with the plea that we should do something about it.

To his credit, Harry J. Skornia in *Television and Society: An Inquest and Agenda for Improvement,* goes somewhat further than this. Indeed, if you can forget the dreadful style in which it is written, with its clichés ("television should . . . enrich rather than vulgarize"), its constant interrogatives ("will America arouse herself about broadcasting in time?"), and his arguments *ad hominem* ("philosophers and historians have warned . . ."), which at times seems to parody the style of the mass media, there is much that is worth while.

Mr. Skornia, who is a professor of Radio and Television at the University of Illinois and has worked in both commercial and educational broadcasting, attempts to place his general analysis in some kind of social and political context. He discusses executive control, management and financing, and documents the extent to which broadcasting is dominated by corporate concepts of profit realization, unlike, he argues, newspapers which were founded on journalistic principles and still cling, in part, to some noncommercial values.

He draws attention to the vast and diversified corporate interests of the three or four broadcasting giants, which in some instances tie together broadcasting, the production and distribution of receiving sets, broadcasting equipment, and defense contracts. Such empires, Mr. Skornia argues, with their stake in the cold war and a natural anti-union bias can hardly be expected to deal with today's world objectively.

He points out that the program-rating system, which terrorizes TV executives, is based on extremely dubious scientific methods and is probably highly inaccurate; and he thus questions the industry's claim that the public is getting what it wants. He suggests that receiving sets could be equipped with a "like" and "dislike" button by which those interested enough could signal their immediate and

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considered judgment on a program to the rating organization. But then, fearing that people might turn out to prefer *Peyton Place* and *Bonanza* anyway, he argues without so much as a glance at the First Amendment that "people do not necessarily want what they need," and takes the industry to task for not providing people with their "objective needs."

Television and Society is Mr. Skornia's case for more rigorous public control of existing media systems and the establishment of a competing government-controlled system modeled on the B.B.C. The cost of such a system would not be great in comparison to what he calls the hidden costs of commercial broadcasting. Following Eugene Paul's breakdown in *The Hungry Eye* (Ballantine Books), Skornia suggests that these costs amount to a television tax composed of the amortization of the set (he notes that broadcasting is one of the few industries in which the consumer must make the capital investment), electricity and repair costs, and an advertising tax which is that portion of the cost of a nationally advertised product that goes for television advertising. He insists, incidentally, that after a national television advertising campaign, prices are raised rather than lowered.

If, then, we are already paying for television (Skornia estimates that the advertising tax is $75 for the average family and the television tax is between $110 and $250), the modest tax for a state-owned system (about $12) is hardly excessive. Most countries do have some form of public ownership. We do not, he shows, because of the enormous lobbying power of the industry during the formative years of broadcasting and today — lobbying which is likely to continue in light of the enormous profits realized in broadcasting. In this regard Skornia quotes the Canadian Roy Thomson who said, after being granted a franchise to operate a commercial television station in Scotland, that he had been granted "a license to print money."

Skornia is well aware of and deeply concerned with the enormous power of mass communications and goes so far as to say that they could "become the instruments of social control." But in trying to demonstrate that power, he exposes the fundamental weakness of his own analysis. Like many critics he tries to demonstrate that television programs are almost directly related to anti-social behavior, and he quotes such dubious sources as J. Edgar Hoover to prove that television violence triggers crime, and that television sex stimulates promiscuity and divorce. But as sounder researchers (like Eleanor Maccoby and Wilbur Schramm) have pointed out, the relationship is not quite that simple.

It is precisely on the question of the relationship between mass communications and society that most of the writing in this area flounders. In general, both the professional sociologists and our critics consider communications simply tools, techniques, or a media in which society is reflected and through which its values are pumped like water through a pipe. But as Norbert Wiener said over fifteen years ago, "Communications in society . . . are the cement which binds its fabric together," and mass communications are the cement of mass society.

This is the point at which analysis should begin. Such an analysis would explain why the calls for reform fail. It would make us doubt the utility of Skornia's petition for government intervention, for even if more rigorous controls could somewhat improve the cultural tone of mass communications, would their general substance be changed? We already have the example of educational broadcasting and, recognizing that it is financially limited, there is still little reason for optimism. Most educational broadcasting is politically timid, culturally cautious, and a dreadful bore.

A study of mass communications as our social binding force would open up dozens of new areas for research: the effect of the media as media, which Marshall McLuhan probed in *Understanding Media*; the impact on our consciousness and our creative minds of the constant (and hence inevitably mechanized) audio and visual stimuli designed for radio, television, Muzak and their variations; the use of the media as an instrument in shaping consensus politics by reducing intelligence, creativity, and even dissent to a common denominator and thereby institutionalizing it.

Short of such a discussion, the sociologists offer little more than Edward R. Murrow. At least Skornia, in the fine tradition of our muckrakers, turns up much that is interesting and even useful. But as Lincoln Steffens eventually realized and pointed out in his *Autobiography*, exposure is no substitute for analysis, and even if the facts are known, people may not make the right decisions.

To expect them to do so is partly to misunderstand the pervasive influence of a mass communications system which can continually inundate us collectively with its organization and analysis of reality, while our critical faculties, individually, can only operate sporadically and upon fragments. But that explanation, of course, is part of the analysis I am asking for.

Child of Affluence

A WAY OF SEEING. *Photographs of New York, by Helen Levitt, with an essay by James Agee. The Viking Press. 78 pp. $6.50.*

POLISH JEWS: A Pictorial Record. *By Roman Vishniac. Introductory Essay by Abraham Joshua Heschel. Schocken Books. 31 pp. $6.*

JAMES JOYCE IN PARIS: His Final Years. *By Gisèle Freund and V. B. Carleton. Preface by Simone de Beauvoir. Harcourt, Brace & World. 117 pp. $8.50.*

CHINESE JOURNEY. *Photographs by Gun Kessle. Text by Jan Myrdal. Pantheon Books. 159 pp. $9.95.*

WARREN MILLER

Affluence is the mother of the non-book, the product of a society hellbent to cut down its forests and perfect the coffee-resistant dust jacket: trivial issue of trivial parents, the stereopticon's bad seed. Hundreds are produced each year, usually around Christmas time, a dead giveaway. One has a vision of them being delivered like paperbacks: in bundles, trussed, dropped at the doors of bookstores and left to make their own way. In good time they end on remainder counters, still a "gift" book; time and handling have not transformed them into something more.

But as with the paperbacks, chance or subversion provides a stick of dynamite in nearly every bundle—a good book, volatile, surrounded by the sawdust of *Student Nurse*, early Henry Miller, late John O'Hara, bound tributes to Adlai Stevenson and the mysteries of being female, Jewish-mother joke books, English novels, TV repair manuals. There is one such here, Helen Levitt's photographs, any one of which is worth all the plaster hot dogs and silk-screened soup cans, that joke gone bad and taken seriously by far too many. These photographs, made in Harlem and East Harlem in the early forties, already have a historical, almost Dickensian air about them: those boys could now be in Vietnam or dead of an overdose; and the pathetic spindle-legged girls are more than likely mothers now and, all unknowing, moving in the classical gestures of protection and caress which Miss Levitt arrested with so much art when she photographed *their* mothers.

There is an unnecessary introduction by

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the late James Agee. I should like to know something about Helen Levitt and her methods of work; instead, Agee informs us that Brady's work has a "kind of Homeric or Tolstoyan nobility," and that Walker Evans' photographs, on the other hand, have a "kind of Joycean denseness, insight, and complexity. . . ." Miss Levitt, however, comes "as close to the pure spontaneity of true folk art as the artist, aware of himself as such, can come; and an absolute minimum of intellection, of technical finesse, or of any kind of direction or interference on the part of the artist as artist stands between the substance and the emotion and their communication." So much for Miss Levitt: she is reduced to pure instinct with a machine in her hand; and Agee thought this, apparently, a way of praising her. And there are the many easy parallels (all nonexistent) with other art forms: the objects in one photograph "assemble their delicate order like so many syllables in a line of poetry. . . . " Nice metaphors do not make aesthetic law.

Agee's condescension toward Miss Levitt (I do not know how else it can be read) has, however, a legitimate parallel: his condescension toward the Negro and Puerto Rican subjects of the photographs. The ". . . southern-blooded are more childlike than the northern-blooded . . . in children and adults alike, of this pastoral stock, there is more spontaneity." Agee has been the subject of too much piety; his "rich" prose is not thick with ideas but, like Dylan Thomas' "dense" verse, often merely oratorical. His essay is an unfortunate intrusion but it can be ignored; the photographs are there and they make a world. Miss Levitt, like Jakob Riis and Atget, has presented us with a record of a world whose citizens are dead and yet their world lives on: Riis's haunting, unforgettable photos of children working in the textile mills and Atget's Paris poor—those days are gone forever, and yet the exploitation of the children still goes on. Only the form of it has changed. The 20th-century slums, as a New York State legislative committee report recently pointed out, produce schizophrenics as the slums of the 19th produced tuberculars.

Ortega's standard for a work of art —does it create a world of its own?—provides a handy and apt criterion for judging these books. Miss Levitt succeeds; Vishniac fails, not merely because he is less an artist than Levitt but because these thirty-one photographs are not enough to give us that thick archival document we need. Thirty-one photographs cannot cover, even in the most superficial, journalistic sense, the world of Eastern Jewry from the Baltic to the Carpathian Mountains, which is this book's avowed intention: the subtitle is *A Pictorial Record*. No, it is, rather, a heartbreaking glimpse of a world which began to die in 1939, a year after these photographs were made. Some of the photographs are memorable: the Kafkan "Entrance to the Old Ghetto" (Cracow) with a half-seen ghostly figure climbing a flight of steps, rain falling; the hopelessness of "Storekeeper with Nothing to Sell"; the Rembrandtesque quality of "Yeshiva Examination": these southern-blooded, childlike and spontaneous people, all dead now, killed in the camps of the northern-blooded Germans.

It would be good to have a more nearly total record, 300 photographs rather than thirty; and when that book is one day published I pray it will be without an introduction by Professor Heschel: "In almost every Jewish home, even in the humblest and poorest, stood a bookcase full of volumes; proud and stately folio-tomes together with shy small-sized books." Such seminary prose is deader even than God Himself—a possibility even *The New York Times* has recently seen fit to note. One might even lament His passing without shedding a tear for the prose which, in this century, strained to keep Him alive a little longer.

An iconography of Joyce would be a very useful thing to have; we shall have to go on waiting for it. *James Joyce in Paris* is a silly book; it is a gift book; it diminishes its subject. A line from *Finnegans Wake* is quoted (under a photograph of the Tuileries in winter, for some reason): "A hundred cares, a tithe of troubles and is there one who understands me?" Clearly, among those who had to do with this book, there is not one. There are a few unremarkable photographs of Joyce, and many of Paris and other writers; and the captions are at least as distinguished—accompanying a "studio" portrait of Elizabeth Bowen: "Elizabeth Bowen, who had always defended Joyce, even if somewhat uneasily, felt that he could be properly understood only by the Irish." And under the photo of Stephen Spender (1938): He was a "frequent visitor, who always brought news from London of the most interesting authors and of recent books that Sylvia should order." What has any of this got to do with Joyce? About as much as "I am leafy speafing" has to do with the Seine; the authors use it as a caption for a picture titled: "Fishing on the Seine, 1932." "Who ever anywhere will read these written words?" Not very many, I think.

I have left for last the Myrdals' *Chinese Journey*; its subject matter puts it beyond Ortegan categories—who would be fool enough to demand that China be captured, even by 10,000 photographs?—and the State Department's "rules" against travel there and our mass media's seeming lack of interest in Chinese realities (as opposed, for example, to fictive famines) make criticism sound rather like ingratitude. Gun Kessle (Mrs. Myrdal) is not a

GO

1

Grain elevator, thunder, freaks
— and also normal children —
It is time to row.
It is time to be veering while
rowing. What a lot of mud!
And, filled with burning oranges,
the kayak itself!
Which we folded away.

2

All lakes are ephemeral.
They happened to their point.
Should I spend many years too,
(should I) bolt away
Moving a balanced load?
These hands are beyond
My capacity to move!
Quicksand, you take a year.

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great photographer; still, a sufficient number of her photos are evocative and moving, and all are informative; but more to the point: they are all we've got of China today. And it is true that Myrdal's notes are sparse and often written in a sociological shorthand (surely there can be nothing worse); yet, there's nowhere else one can read such conversation as this, between two Mongolians:

> ". . . well, I kill a wolf now and then. I get prize money for that from the state. Ten yuan for a large one, five for a cub. The skin one can keep or sell. Once the party suggested that this prize money should go to the collective, but now they have changed their opinion."
>
> "That was a deviation," said the party secretary.
>
> "He who kills a wolf kills it. That's the way I see it. . . . "

or:

> . . . Tankto the old man was singing with a high-pitched voice, tears trickling down his cheeks.
>
> "It is a song about love," says his son. "But it can also be a song about the poor and despised. It is a song about longing, about him who is long gone. But it can also be a song about horses. It is a song about a sister, but it can also be a song of a bride. It all depends on how you feel. He is a poet. . . ."

Photos like "Salt caravan for Peking," "Milking the mare," "Evening in the camp" and "The young party secretary" demand a poet like Perse: ". . . All the silent paths of the world are open. We have crushed some of those oily plants. . . . And there is no more question of doing or counting, but weakness gains the limbs of the strongest; and an hour more vast than this hour we have never known. . . . Far away are the lands of white earth, or of slate. Men of low civilization wander in the mountains. And the country is governed. . . ."

Still, when sociologists begin to write like that, the cheering will never stop; but it would be wrong to demand less.

Literary Letter from London

PETER BUCKMAN

An English writer, now living in London, Mr. Buckman spent three years in publishing, in London and New York.

Winter brought to an anticlimactic close the *annus mirabilis* of the English woman writer. Virtually everyone except Rosamund Lehmann produced something; but except for a gritty confection from Edna O'Brien, a soggy but impressive cake from Muriel Spark, and a plain but delicious pudding from Olivia Manning, the craft of fiction seems to have become as traditional, homespun and antique as the making of embroidery. The result is very beautiful, good for conversation, a souvenir of past enjoyment, and emphatically not for everyday use.

It may be unfair to lump women writers together as a category, but the fact is that they dominated the lists without leaving behind any memorable favors, or raising any serious challengers. *The Guardian,* a leading English daily newspaper, awarded its first fiction prize to Clive Barry's *Crumb Borne,* not so much a commendation of excellence as an awareness of its masculine difference in a season of conventional novels. In its setting — a prison camp—and its classless characters, and above all in its obsessive description, the book undoubtedly contrasts with the upper-middle-class gentility of so much of the fiction published during the year. Yet the cumulative effect is like being slugged with a bulky thesaurus: synonymic stupor.

The overall impression of the winter's books comes unfortunately near to the "Come to Britain" travel posters: scenes of cozy rusticity, picturesque atmosphere, with nothing to put off the tourist. The worst example of this is *Cork Street, Next to the Hatters* by Pamela Hansford Johnson. This is subtitled *A Novel in Bad Taste,* and it is readable, annoying and offensively patronizing. Deliberately archaic (it has little 18th-century summaries at the top of each chapter, and a mock-Fielding conversational approach), it chiefly concerns the efforts of Tom Hariot, an inhabitant of Cork St., St. James's, who has a comfortable private income and a social conscience which makes him teach linguistics at London University, to write a drama that will be absolutely unplayable on the English stage. His object in so doing is to prove that *somewhere,* amidst the fashionable assaults on any kind of censorship, the good taste and sense of the general public will draw the line. He therefore works into his play every kind of disgusting happening, it is taken on by "an up-and-coming stage-director" and becomes a *succès de scandale,* which leads Tom to quit his job and retreat to America.

Somewhere in all this is an assault on "fashionable" as opposed to "traditional" values, but those characters who bask in the author's approval are the least interesting in the book, as all they have to do is hang around and admire one another's good sense. It is therefore difficult, unless one is looking for guidance on how to pass one's time if one has enough money to do nothing, to find anywhere an example to follow. Most of the things cultural liberals hold dear are parodied in a shallow and silly way which might make old ladies hug one another in delight. And apart from begging the central question on censorship — why an aging Court official, the Lord Chamberlain, should arbitrate on matters of public taste — the book can only be called genteel. This word sets up the same *frissons* among the "cultured" as "bourgeois" among the Socialists. I mean it to describe an attitude to the present dominated by a romanticized view of the past and, more specifically, a belief that middle-class values are, simply, better.

Unfortunately Miss Hansford Johnson is not alone in her gentility. The season's fiction on the whole has been genteel, and while this is not meant to imply wholesale dismissal, it is surely significant that the pick of the bestsellers were American imports. Our balance of payments in both cash and culture showed a big deficit in fiction, and trend setting was no more in our grasp than the efficient control of our colonies. There seems to be much truth in the equating of innovation with national expansion, and decline with the lack of it.

The dearth was demonstrated by a competition "to find a new writer with major literary talent," sponsored by Chilton Books (U.S.), Peter Owen Ltd. and Mayflower Books (U.K.), with a prize of £1000—not much by U.S. standards, but not inconsiderable. Not one single entry, out of over 1,000 submitted, was thought worthy of bringing to the distinguished judges' attention. The hope was to discover "a writer with high intellectual ability who might have had difficulty in finding a publisher," and it was in vain. Not only does this reflect on the lack of inventive talent; it also shows how unfitted publishing is to behave as an industry, despite adoption of sophisticated American marketing techniques. Production of the raw stuff isn't up to it, and shows few hopes of becoming so. The same signs appeared in America when Putnam combined with Fawcett, McCalls, and Embassy Pictures to offer a gigantic prize, the closing date of which had to be postponed because of the lack of suitable entries. In neither country does there seem to be a considerable vein of untapped talent.

All this is not to say that a traditional writer cannot produce an admirable novel. Olivia Manning has done so in *Friends and Heroes.* She behaves simply

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and properly as E. M. Forster asks: "Yes — oh dear yes — the novel tells a story." This one completes her Balkan trilogy concerning a young married couple, Guy and Harriet Pringle, in Rumania, and as that falls to the Germans, in Greece at the outbreak of the Second World War. It is curiously old-fashioned in the same way as old war movies, peopled by characters with upper-middle-class names and backgrounds, gentle and lingering over scenic description, and as firmly controlled as one expects the English under fire to be. Guy, absorbed in the struggle against fascism, cannot accept Harriet's need for attention and love, the commitment of their marriage. She turns to a young officer named Charles for a passing and entirely platonic affair. Yet at the end of the book, when it looks as if Athens will fall and all around is gloom, Harriet and Guy both realize they have to fulfill their responsibilities to each other. The tale and its meaning is simple and old-fashioned, but what distinguishes it from the others published during the season is its total lack of pretension or moralizing, its firm and witty narrative drive, and its elegant concealment of craft. There is no strain, no posing. The reader is left pleased to have met the characters, glad that the war is over, and with a vague desire to visit Greece in company as good as Miss Manning's. All these things are pleasant, but the public seemingly wants more than that. Miss Manning has written eleven books, but her sales are unspectacular and her books are virtually unobtainable in paperback.

The English strong suit is nonfiction. In the alliance of careful scholarship with enviable clarity we have few peers. There is also no eschewing of the controversial which, considering the timorousness of our novelists, seems surprising. That paragon of Establishment publishing, the Oxford University Press, concluded its *History of England,* up to 1945, with a volume by A. J. P. Taylor which was received in rather the same way as Admiral Morison's *History of the American People:* deference amounting to awe for the writing—passion, from the controlled to the apoplectic, over the conclusions. Another masterpiece of historical writing was Alistair Horne's *The Fall of Paris 1870-71.* Evocative, yet pruned of excess, careful in its judgments, the book controlled sources and ramifications with impressive ease. Imaginative energy seems to be directed to the past rather than to the writing of fiction. Even in the theatre, where England is generally supposed to have a lead, we have turned backwards. Five plays by Bernard Shaw were filling theatres in the West End, with three running at one time, more than he probably had in his lifetime.

It must, sadly, be doubted that many of the novels published during this season will live long. We have managed to acquire American obsolescence without the ability to invent new models. Our publishing is frequently criticized as being a "cottage industry," but this season proves that the term would be more appropriately applied to the craft of fiction.

ART / John Berger

GIACOMETTI: 1901-1966

For ten years Mr. Berger served as art critic of the New Statesman. *He has written for many English and American periodicals and is now a regular contributor to* New Society. *His most recent published work is* Success and Failure of Picasso *(Penguin).*

The week after Giacometti's death *Paris-Match* published a remarkable photograph of him which had been taken nine months earlier. It shows him alone in the rain, crossing the street near his studio in Montparnasse. Although his arms are through the sleeves, his raincoat is hoiked up to cover his head. Invisibly, underneath the raincoat, his shoulders are hunched.

The immediate effect of the photograph is that of a man curiously casual about his own well-being. A man with crumpled trousers and old shoes, ill equipped for the rain; a man whose preoccupations took no note of the seasons. But what makes the photograph remarkable is that it suggests more than that about Giacometti's character. The coat looks as though it has been borrowed. He looks as though underneath the coat he is wearing nothing except his trousers. He has the air of a survivor. But not in the tragic sense. He has become quite used to his position. I am tempted to say that he looks like a monk, especially since the coat over his head suggests a cowl. But the simile is not accurate enough. He wore his symbolic poverty far more naturally than do most monks.

Every artist's work changes when he dies; and finally no one remembers what his work was like when he was alive. Sometimes one can read what his contemporaries had to say about it. The difference of emphasis and interpretation is largely a question of historical developments. But the death of the artist is also a dividing line.

It seems to me now that no artist's work could ever have been more changed by his death than Giacometti's. In twenty years no one will understand this change. His work will seem to have reverted to normal—although in fact it will have become something different: it will have become evidence from the past, instead of being, as it has been for the last forty years, a possible preparation for something to come.

The reason why Giacometti's death seems to have changed his work so radically is that it had so much to do with an awareness of death. It is as though his death confirms his art: as though one could now arrange his works in a line leading to his death, which would constitute far more than the interruption or termination of that line; which would, on the contrary, constitute the starting point for appreciating his life's work.

You might argue that, after all, nobody ever believed that Giacometti was immortal; his death could always be deduced. Yet it is the fact which makes the difference. While he was alive, his loneliness, his conviction that everybody was unknowable, was no more than a chosen point of view which implied a comment on the society he was living in. Now by

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his death he has proved his point. Or—to put it a better way, for he was not a man concerned with argument—now his death has proved his point for him.

This may sound extreme, but despite the relative traditionalism of his actual methods, Giacometti was a most extreme artist. The neo-Dadaists and other so-called iconoclasts of today are conventional window dressers by comparison.

The extreme proposition on which Giacometti based all his mature work was that no reality—and he was concerned with nothing except the contemplation of reality—could ever be shared. That is why he believed it impossible for a work to be finished. That is why the content of any work is not the nature of the figure or head portrayed but the incomplete history of *his* staring at it. The act of looking was like a form of prayer for him—it became a way of approaching, but never being able to grasp, an absolute. The act of looking kept him aware of being suspended between being and the truth.

If he had been born in an earlier period, Giacometti would have been a religious artist. As it was, born in a period of profound and widespread alienation, he refused to escape through religion, which would have been an escape into the past. He was obstinately faithful to his own time, which must have seemed to him rather like his own skin: the sack into which he was born. In that sack he simply could not in all honesty overcome his conviction that he had always been and would always be totally alone.

To hold such a view of life requires a certain kind of temperament. It is beyond me to define that temperament precisely, but it was visible in Giacometti's face: a kind of endurance lightened by cunning. If man were purely animal and not a social being, all old men would have this expression. One can glimpse something similar in Samuel Beckett's expression. Its antithesis was what you could see in Le Corbusier's face.

But it is by no means only a question of temperament: it is even more a question of the surrounding social reality. Nothing during Giacometti's lifetime broke through his isolation. Those whom he liked or loved were invited to share it temporarily with him. His basic situation —in the sack into which he was born— remained unchanged. (It is interesting that part of the legend about him tells of how almost nothing changed or was moved in his studio for the forty years he lived there. And during the last twenty years he continually recommenced the same five or six subjects.) Yet the nature of man as an essentially social being—although it is objectively proved by the very existence of language, science, culture—can be felt subjectively only through the experience of the force of change as a result of common action.

Insofar as Giacometti's view could not have been held during any preceding historical period, one can say that it reflects the social fragmentation and manic individualism of the late bourgeois intelligentsia. He was no longer the artist in revolt; no longer even the artist in retreat. He was the artist who considered society irrelevant. If it inherited his work, it did so by default.

But when we have said all this, the works remain and are unforgettable. His lucidity and total honesty about the consequence of his situation and outlook were such that he could still save and express a truth. It was an austere truth at the final limit of human interest; but his expressing of it transcends the social despair from which it arose.

Giacometti's proposition that reality is unsharable is true in death. He was not morbidly concerned with the process of death, but he was exclusively concerned with the process of life as seen by a man whose own mortality supplied the only perspective in which he could trust. None of us is in a position to reject this perspective, even though simultaneously we may try to retain others.

I said that his work had been changed by his death. By dying he has emphasized and even clarified the content of his work. But the change—anyway as it seems at this moment—is more precise and specific than that.

Imagine one of the portrait heads confronting you as you stand and look. Or one of the nudes standing there to be inspected, hands at her side, touchable only through the thickness of two sacks—hers and yours—so that the question of nakedness does not arise and all talk of nakedness becomes as trivial as the talk of bourgeois women deciding what clothes to wear for a wedding: nakedness is a detail for an occasion that passes. Imagine one of the sculptures. Thin, irreducible, still and yet not rigid, impossible to dismiss, possible only to inspect, to stare at. If you stare, the figure stares back. That is true also of the most banal portrait. The difference is how you become conscious of the track of your stare and hers: the narrow corridor of looking between you. Perhaps this is like the track of a prayer, if such a thing can be visualized. Either side of the corridor nothing counts. There is only one way to reach her—to stand still and stare. That is why she is so thin. All other possibilities and functions have been stripped away. Her entire reality is reduced to the fact of being seen.

When Giacometti was alive you were standing, as it were, in his place. You put yourself at the beginning of the track of his gaze and the figure reflected this gaze back to you like a mirror. Now that he is dead, or now that you know that he is dead, you take his place rather than put yourself in it. And then it seems that what first moves along the track comes from the figure. It stares, and you intercept the stare. Yet however far back you move along the narrow path, the gaze passes through you.

It appears now that Giacometti made these figures during his lifetime, for himself, as observers of his future absence, his death, his becoming unknowable.

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